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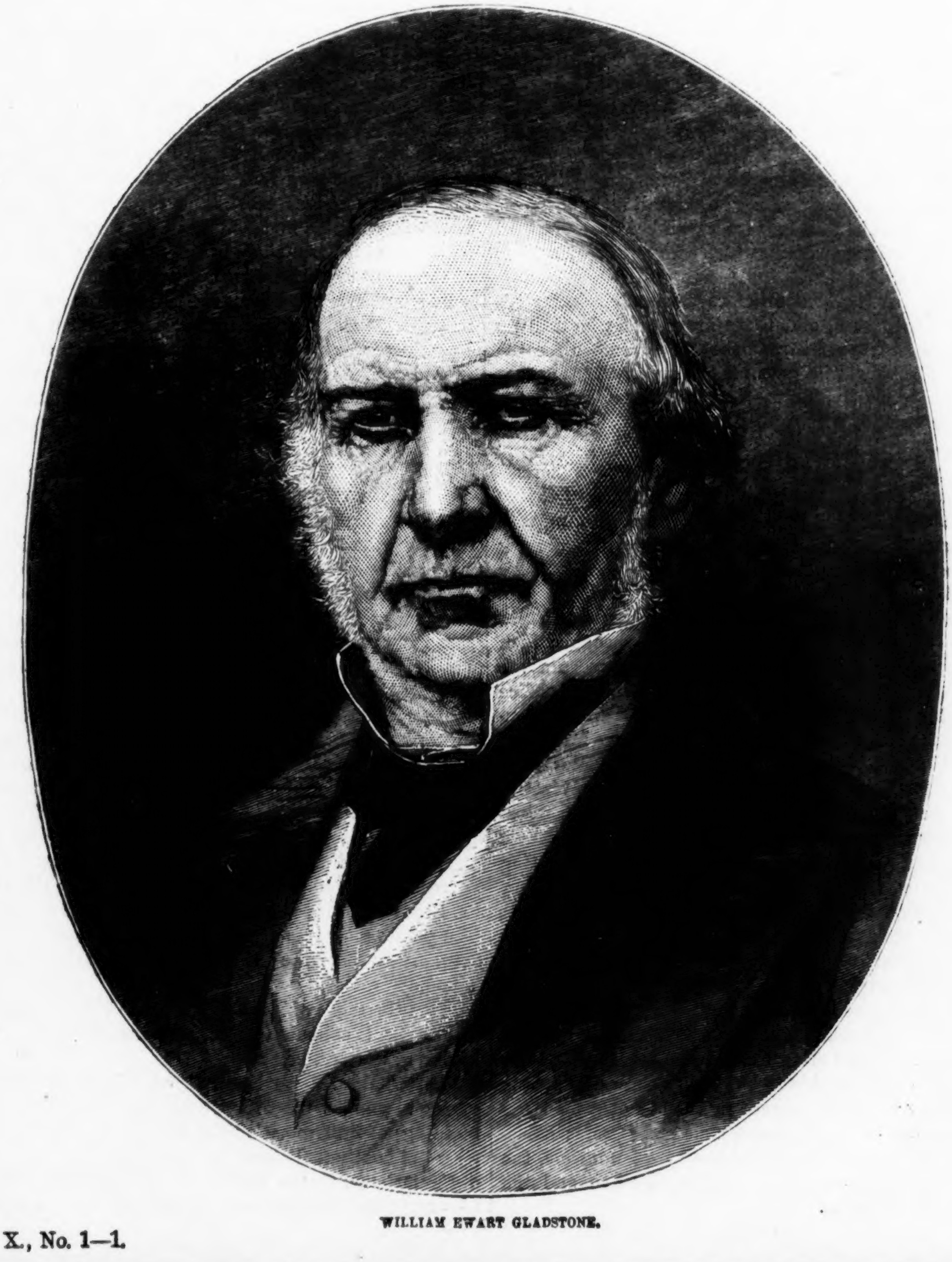
THE BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS.

BY N. ROBINSON.



WILLIAM EWART GLADSTONE.

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THE BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS.

By N. Robinson.

I was stopping at the Tavistock Hotel, in Covent Garden, that most comfortable of bachelor quarters, for, like the Island of St. Senanus, the *frou-frou* of a petticoat is a sound unknown within its sacred precincts. I had done St. Paul's, Westminster Abbey, the Thames Embankment, the Tower, the lanes and alleys of the wondrous old city; the National Gallery, the Crystal Palace—in fact, all the sights save one; and I reserved the Houses of Parliament, in the hope that luck, or chance, might place an order for the Strangers' Gallery in the House of Commons in my way, for I was intensely desirous of witnessing a debate in "the first assemblage of gentlemen in Europe."

Happening to mention my yearnings to a red-faced, red-nosed, ample-waistcoated personage stopping at the hotel, who was very strong on saddle of mutton and port wine—I dined at the same table with him on four different occasions, and he never varied his *menu*—this worthy was good enough to promise me the wished-for voucher.

"I'd like you to go on a field night, when all the great guns will go into action. Let me see, Friday—ay, on Friday Mr. Gladstone's motion about the irrepressible Turk comes on. I must, as you say in America, 'fix you' for Friday."

Mr. Murgatroyd was as good as his word, and the day named found me in possession of the small strip of paper, signed "W. J. Corbet, M. P."; each member being entitled to issue one order per diem, which was my open sesame to the Strangers' Gallery.

"Be down at the House before three o'clock, for it's first come first served, and there are people who take up their places at noon. Mr. Corbet, the member for the County of Wicklow, who gave me the order, tells me that Sir Stafford Northcote, the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer under Beaconsfield, will reply to Gladstone, and that the air is dynamitic."

After fortifying the inner man with a Southdown mutton-chop and a pewter of London stout, I emerged into Covent Garden, strolled through its arcade, glowing with flowers and laden with a thousand delicious perfumes; struck the Strand at Charing Cross; gained Whitehall; passing the Admiralty and Horse Guards; pausing to gaze at the two mounted Life Guardsmen, immovable as statues; glancing at the old palace window, through which Charles I. stepped forth, on that raw January morning, to meet the headsman's ax; down by the new Foreign Office—confronted by the palatial mansion of the Duke of Buccleuch, whose son was so mercilessly beaten by Mr. Gladstone at Midlothian—on into Parliament Street, Westminster Abbey looming up in the distance, and the Victoria Tower of the House of Lords, keen-cut as a cameo against the blue May sky; and having secured the friendly offices of a policeman—whose lot is not a happy one—in piloting me through carriages, drays, trucks, phætons, wagons, growlers, hansoms and costermonger barrows, ebbing to and from Westminster Bridge, I entered New Palace Yard just as "Big Ben" was booming the half-hour past three.

There was hurrying to and fro in New Palace Yard: members of Parliament dashing up in hansoms, on horseback, or rapidly passing on foot to Westminster Hall; barristers, brief-laden; attorneys in close confab with their legal advisers; pert-looking clerks with rolls of papers; principals in causes being heard in the law courts on the west side of the hall; witnesses, male and female; office-seekers of every description, sight-seers *ad nauseam*, the inevitable country cousins, the gaping Mossoo and the inquisitive Down-easter.

Having been advised by Mr. Murgatroyd to take a look at the Houses from Westminster Bridge, I passed under the windows of Mr. Speaker's private residence, and up the stone steps at the foot of the great Clock Tower, on to the bridge.

The site of the old Royal Palace at Westminster is now occupied by the Houses of Parliament, or, to speak more correctly, by the New Palace. This forms one of the most magnificent buildings in Europe, and probably the largest gothic edifice ever erected. I may mention that it covers an area of nine acres; that, eastward, it presents a frontage of nearly 1,000 feet; that the great tower at the southwestern extremity reaches the gigantic elevation of 350 feet; that towers of lesser magnitude crown other portions of the building; that fourteen halls, galleries and vestibules, and other apartments of great capacity and noble proportions, are contained within its limits; that it comprises eight official residences, all first-rate mansions, fit to receive families of distinction; that twenty corridors and lobbies are required to serve as the great roadways through this aggregation of edifices; that thirty-two noble apartments facing the River Thames are occupied as committee-rooms; that libraries, waiting-rooms, dining-rooms and clerks' offices are thick as leaves in Valumbrosa; that eleven courts and a score of minor openings give light and air to the interior of this superb fabric; that its cubic contents exceed 15,000,000 feet, being one-half more than St. Paul's; and that the structure contains no less than 1,100 distinct apartments, amongst which is a chapel for Divine worship, formed out of the crypt of old St. Stephen's.

The building was begun in 1838, and completed externally in 1868. Magnesian limestone, from Anston, in Yorkshire, was used for the exterior, Caen stone for the interior. The great river-wall is of Aberdeen granite. The building is warmed through steam-pipes sixteen miles in length, and ventilated most carefully. Its cost was over $15,000,000.

The principal façade on the building faces the river, and can be seen only from Westminster Bridge, or from the Albert Embankment opposite. It is 1,000 feet in length, including the two projecting wings at the extremities. The wing on the right contains the residence of the Speaker of the House of Commons, and of that grim functionary, the Sergeant-at-Arms. That on the left, the apartments of the Usher of the Black Rod, and of the Lords' Librarian. The façade is decorated with the royal arms of England, from William the Conqueror to the present reign.

Upon the site now occupied by the Houses of Parliament, Edward the Confessor first erected a royal palace, which was enlarged by his successors. William Rufus built the great hall of Westminster, and held his Christmas in it in 1099. A fire in 1299 destroyed nearly the whole of the palace, including Westminster Hall, but Richard II. had it rebuilt, and Richard's roof stands to-day. Another destructive fire took place in 1512, and only the hall and St. Stephen's Chapel, with its crypt and cloisters, escaped. The palace after this never was restored, but a few buildings, including the celebrated Star Chamber, were added.

From the reign of Edward VI. up to 1850 the Commons met in St. Stephen's Chapel, and the Lords in a neighboring apartment.

Fain would I have lingered on Westminster Bridge, gazing at yonder magnificent gothic pile—at the superb buildings of St. Thomas's Hospital, on the other side of the river—at Lambeth Palace, the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the distance—but the fourteen-ton bell of "Big Ben" boomed out the quarter. I was now compelled, after casting one long, last, lingering look, to return to the Palace Yard.

A rush of indefinable sensations came to me as I entered the Westminster Hall. The history of merrie England seemed emblazoned in the marvelous window that shot glittering shafts of red and yellow and green and purple athwart the floor, which has rung to the mailed heel of the Second Richard.

This glorious hall is 250 feet in length, 68 feet wide, and 42 feet high. Its cedar roof is a gothic poem. Westminster Hall has been the scene of stirring events. The very first act performed in it was the deposition of the King who built it—Richard II.—in 1299. Parliament has frequently met in it, and the law courts of England were permanently established here as early as 1224, before the present Hall was built, and they still occupy a series of buildings to the west of it. The coronation dinners were given within its walls down to George IV., and on these occasions the King's champion rode into the hall and threw down the gauntlet, challenging any one who should contest the King's right to the throne. Oliver Cromwell was installed here Lord Protector, and four years later his head was set upon a pole at the top of the hall fronting the Palace Yard. Numerous trials have been held in the grand old Hall, and amongst those condemned to the scaffold were Sir William Wallace, Sir Thomas More, the Protector Somerset, the Earl and Countess Somerset, the Earl of Strafford, King Charles I., and the Scottish Lords Kilmarnock, Balmerino and Lovat. Warren Hastings was tried here, Richard Brinsley Sheridan making the cedar roof ring with his famous Begum speech; and, in 1806, Lord Melville. State ceremonies and trials no longer take place in the Hall, and it now serves only as a noble lobby to the courts of law and the Houses of Parliament.

Passing along Westminster Hall, I asked a policeman the cause of a great crowd of persons of both sexes gathered round a doorway to the right.

"Bless yer hinnocent 'art," he replied, "that there is the Divorce Court, and the beastlier the case the greater the crowd."

"But there are ladies in the crowd?"

"Blest if I call 'em ladies, though they calls themselves so."

Mounting the marble stairway, I turned to the left, and entered St. Stephen's Hall. Ranged along either side of the hall are twelve "statues of men who rose to eminence by the eloquence and abilities they displayed in the House of Commons," namely: Hampden, Falkland, Clarendon, Selden, Somers, Sir Robert Walpole, Lord Mansfield, Lord Chatham, Pitt, Fox, Burke and Grattan. I do not think I ever beheld a more superb statue than that of Lucius Cary (Lord Falkland), one of the first men who fell, fighting for his King, at Edgehill, in the great Civil War. Hampden also fell in this fight. On the left hand, behind the statue of Edmund Burke, is a doorway, occupying the same position as that which gave access to the members of the House between 1547 and 1680, and by the left side of this door the assassin lurked who shot Mr. Perceval on the 11th of May, 1812.

I lingered in the corridor leading to the central hall, gazing at the fresco paintings, in compartments, of the "Last Sleep of Argyle," the "Execution of Montrose," the "Departure of the Pilgrim Fathers," and others, till the booming of "Big Ben" told me that I must gain the sanctuary. Crossing the central hall, I was passing into the corridor leading to the "lobby," when a bright-eyed, pot-bellied policeman interposed his blue arm and gloved hand.

"Where are you going?"

"Into the House."

"You cannot pass without a horder."

"I have one."

"Show it, please."

A number of persons crowded around this entrance, each seeking admission to the lobby through the medium of some member to whom they were known. Cards, and names on pieces of paper, are taken to the doorkeepers, who, in turn, send the pasteboards to the member "wanted," if he be in the House. Should he not yet have arrived, the card is "racked" for him, and the applicant left to cool his heels until such time as the august personage puts in an appearance.

Members come down the corridor to meet their friends, and the air of importance assumed by the vast majority of them is intensely amusing. In fact, they lead you to understand that a prolonged absence from the lobby may mean a collapse of the Government.

"All right, sir," exclaimed the policeman, as I showed the order and passed on.

The lobby of the House of Commons itself is a very fine apartment, square in plan, about forty-five feet each way, and having a doorway in each side. It forms the chief vestibule to the House of Commons, and by a short corridor communicates with the great octagonal hall in the centre of the palace, which, in fact, forms the only entrance to the lobby. Each side of the lobby is alike in its general features, being divided into three equal parts, the central portion containing a deeply recessed and lofty doorway, and the others being divided into two stories. In this hall, the messengers of the House sit waiting to be dispatched, either to Government officers for documents, or, in the event of a division, to hunt out for members, however late it may be, or, rather, however early in the morning.

In this lobby the "whip," or whipper-in of his party, spends most of his time, rarely entering the House, but "buttonholeing" every doubtful and recusant member, preparatory to a division, and making as many promises in a given hour as would take him any given seven years to accomplish.

The electric bell, which gives notice of a division, rings simultaneously in every department of the vast building, and then comes a schoolboy rush of the members, many of whom know as little about the subject upon which they have been called to vote as the first Pharaoh of George IV.'s last attack of the gout.

As I stood in the lobby, *en queue*, waiting my turn to enter the narrow doorway leading to the Strangers' Gallery, a stern and warning cry of "hats off" aroused me to a sense of "a something."

"What is the matter?" I asked of a fat, perspiring individual in front.

"Speaker's going to prayers," was the curt reply.

Presently the Speaker, in a flowing wig and robes and court dress, preceded by a gentleman in a bag wig and with a sword by his side, carrying on his shoulder a heavy gilt club surmounted by a crown, and followed by two other gentlemen in the attire of Queen's Counsel, crossed the lobby and entered the House. An electric bell tinkled, the doors of the House were closed with a crash, and the first Commoner in England was at prayers.

"Was that the mace?" I asked of a clean-shaven, intelligent-looking young gentleman who stood immediately behind me, and who was also *en route* to the Strangers' Gallery, as told by the order held in readiness between his forefinger and thumb.

"Yes, sir," he replied; "and few British taxpayers are

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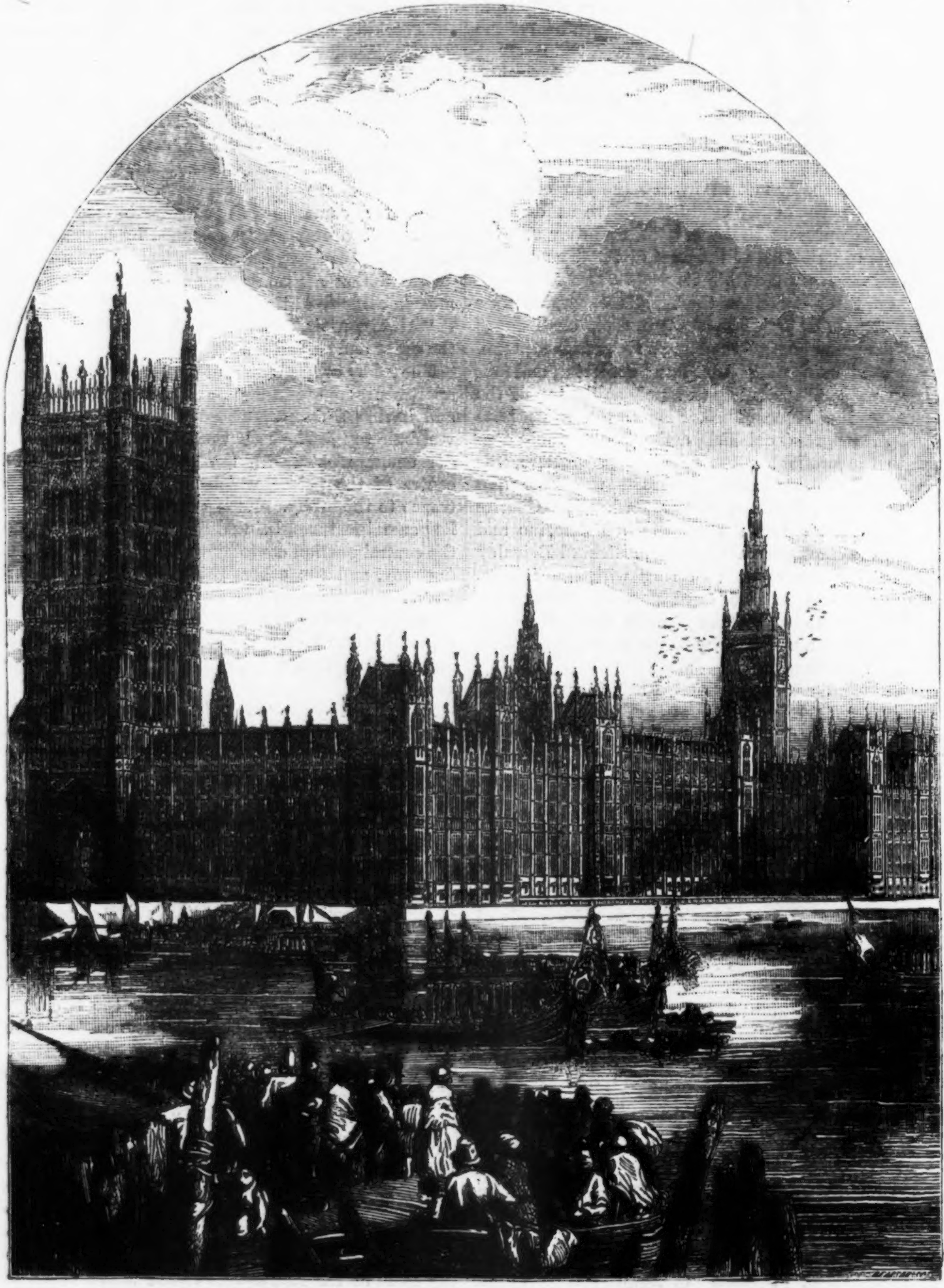
aware how important this toy is to the legislative duties of their representatives. Without it the House of Commons does not exist, and it is as essential that it shall be present at the deliberations of our Senate, as that Mr. Speaker should be there himself. Without the Speaker, the House never proceeds to business, and without the mace the Speaker cannot take the chair. At the commencement of a new Parliament, as the other day, and before the election of a Speaker, this valuable emblem of his dignity is hidden under the table of the House, and the Clerk of the Table presides during the election; but no sooner is the Speaker elected than the mace is drawn from its hiding-place and deposited on the table, as described further on, where it ever after remains during the sitting of the House, and at the rising of the House Mr. Speaker carries it away with him, and never trusts it out of his keeping."


THE NEW PALACE OF WESTMINSTER OR HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

I saw that I had tapped a mine.

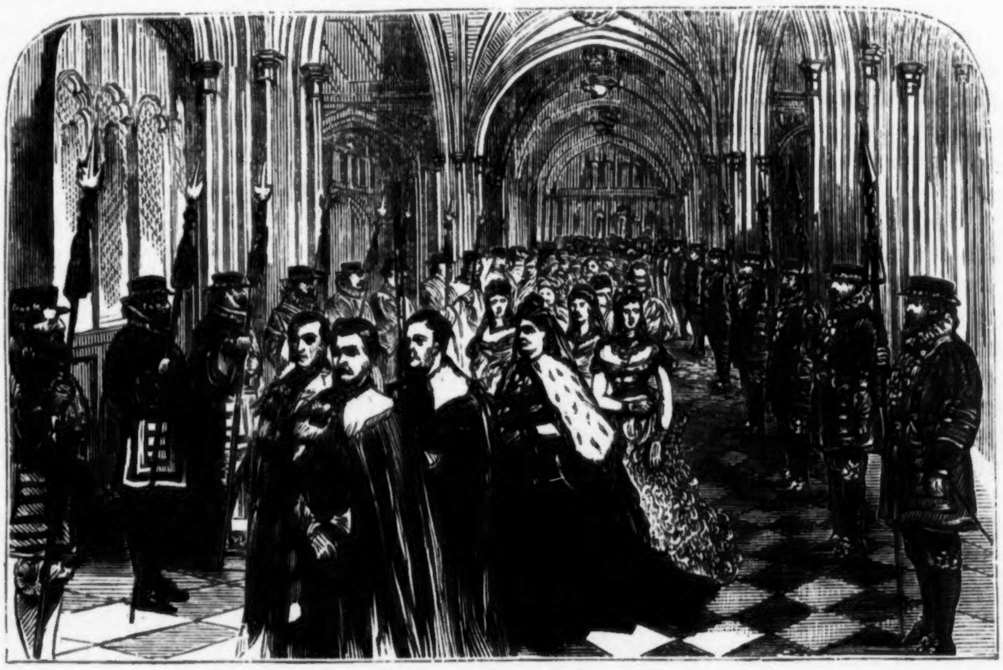
"You are going to the Strangers' Gallery?"

"Yes."

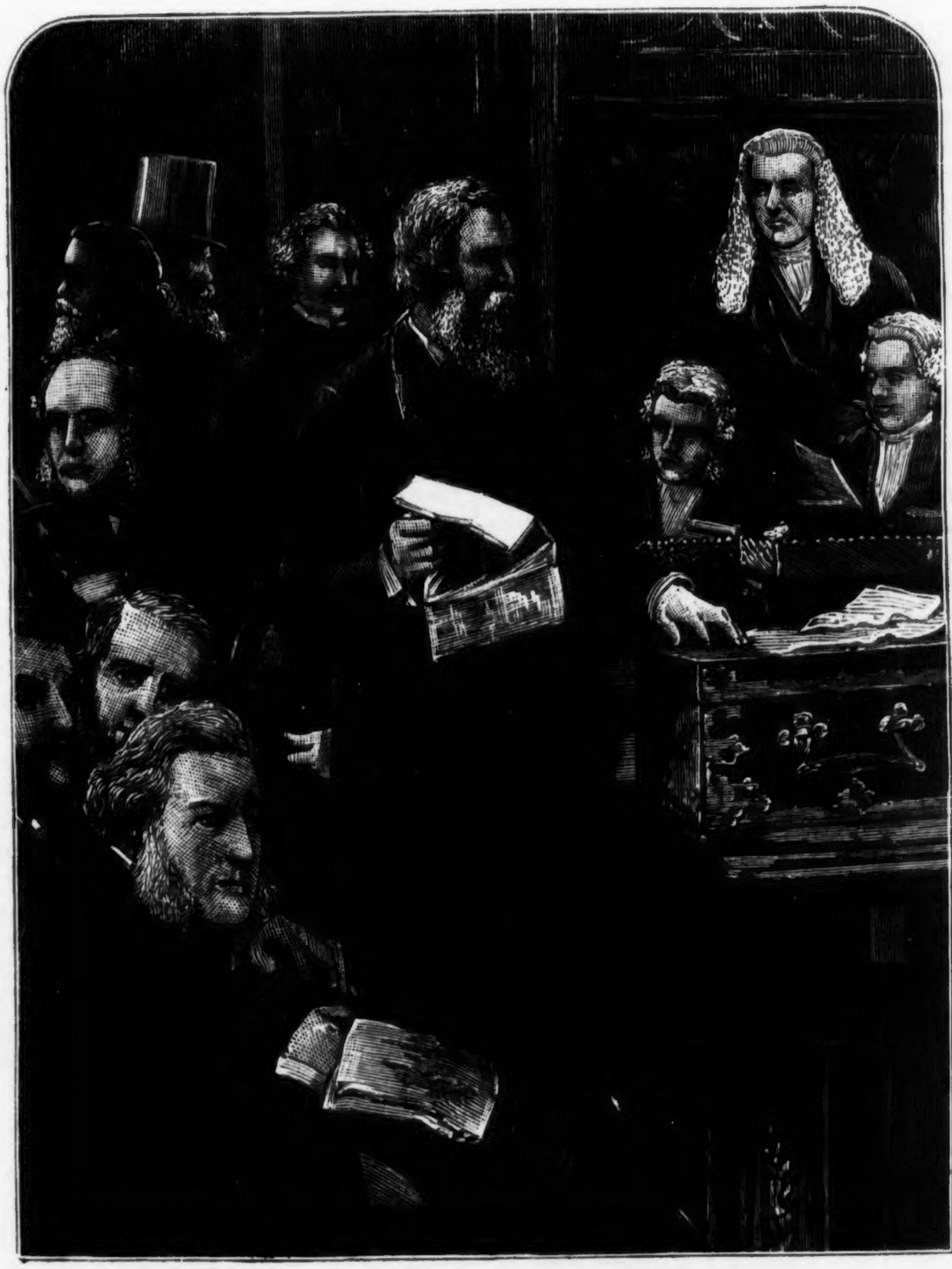
"So am I. Now, I am from the United States, and most anxious to know 'who's who,' and all about the 'swells,' as you would call them. I feel that I am in good hands, and — here is my card; you'll take supper with me at the Tavistock, and we'll toast the House of Commons in a couple of bottles of any brand of champagne you name."

I guess I struck him in the right way, for he handed me *his* card—"Mr. Percy Montford, Brick Court, Temple" — a sucking lawyer, with hopes of one day working his way into the House, as a stepping-stone to the Bench.

"*Apropos* of the mace," he continued, with a laugh, after most politely informing me of his intention to coach me, "when the mace lies *upon* the table, it is a *House;* when *under*, it is a *Committee.* When the mace is *out* of the House, no business can be done; when *from* the table, and *upon* the shoulder of the Sergeant-at-Arms, the Speaker alone manages."



THE QUEEN PROCEEDING TO OPEN PARLIAMENT.



DISSOLUTION OF PARLIAMENT PROCLAIMED.

"Is this mace the 'bauble' that Cromwell ordered away when he dismissed the 'rump' of the Long Parliament in 1653?" I asked, both for information's sake and to show the young lawyer that I was not a graduate of Harvard for nothing.

"No," he replied; "the Speaker's mace of the reign of Charles I. perished when the crown plate was sold, in 1649. The Commonwealth mace, which came into use in that year, was ornamented with flowers, instead of the cross and bell at the top, and with the arms of England and Ireland instead of those of the late King; but the Restoration supplied the mace you saw to-day, in 1660."

Our turn having arrived, we squirmed up the narrow stairway, and I found myself in the British House of Commons. Having taken my seat, Mr. Montford on my right, I gazed around me with feelings of very considerable interest.

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Let me endeavor to describe the appearance of the House. It is but 65 feet long, 45 feet broad, and 45 feet in height. In fact, it is reduced to the smallest possible size for the sake of hearing. It is a magnificent and imposing apartment, but so far as decoration goes, when compared with the House of Lords, it may be considered plain and unpretending. It is surrounded by galleries, which diminish its apparent size. The ceiling is divided, longitudinally, into three parts, the centre division being horizontal, the others inclined downward; and these longitudinal sections are divided by massive ribs, resting on corbels, into square compartments, which are again subdivided. The massive ribs are carried along the sides, and the corbels rest on elegantly enriched shafts. The walls from beneath the windows to the galleries are paneled. On the east and west sides of the House there are six windows, and at the north and south ends there are three compartments, to correspond with the fenestral arrangement of the sides; these spaces are filled with a very pretty lattice-work of wrought brass, forming a screen to the ladies' gallery. The windows are filled with rich-stained glass, displaying the armorial insignia of twenty-four of the English boroughs.

The galleries are particularly effective specimens of design in gothic woodwork, and with their hand-rails and trefoil ornaments of wrought brass, are extremely fine. The side galleries are for the use of the members of the House, and each contains two rows of seats. The north gallery is for the use of the reporters, and to it there is a separate staircase with retiring-room. The south gallery is divided into two portions, one being for distinguished visitors, the other for such of the public as may be fortunate enough to obtain admission. It was in this gallery that I was seated. The fronts of the galleries bore, on small shields, the badges and monograms of the various sovereigns of England.

The Speaker's chair, at the north end of the House, is of very fine design. There are several rows of seats in the body of the House, and, all being of ample dimensions and covered with green morocco leather, harmonizing delightfully with the warm brown tints of the oak paneling, produce an air of repose and comfort. The Clerk's table is paneled beneath with elaborately carved work, and at its southern end are brass scrolls for the Speaker's mace to rest on during the business of the House.

The Sergeant-at-Arms is near the bar, a single oak rail at the southern end of the House. There are two doors on either side of the House to lead into the division lobbies, and there are similar doorways as entrances into the galleries. Behind the Speaker's chair is a doorway leading to retiring-rooms for the Speaker, and communicating with corridors which give access to the Speaker's private residence.

Considering the very limited area of the House of Commons, a fair proportion of accommodation is afforded to spectators of the proceedings of the Third Estate of the Realm. There is a roomy gallery appropriated to the Corps Diplomatique, press, and distinguished strangers; the Speaker's Gallery, which holds 150 persons, and the Strangers' Gallery, in which I was seated, which contains three rows of seats, each capable of accommodating about 70 persons.

"You must be on your good behavior here," half whispered Mr. Montford; "the rules are awfully strict, and the ushers simply ruthless. No one is allowed to rise from his seat, except for the purpose of leaving, and silence, as nearly absolute as possible, must be observed. Look around you, and you'll see specimens of every class of the British elector and non-elector undergoing the rigid pleasure of witnessing how things are done in the House of Commons."

"Do people ever get into the House by mistake?"

"Such a thing has happened. A country clergyman once innocently walked into the House of Lords and seated himself beside the Duke of Wellington, then fell asleep, and when he awoke the Duke had gone, and had taken his reverence's hat. There was nothing for his reverence to do but to take the Duke's hat, which he did, and it was only after he had returned to his parish that he found the word 'Wellington' on the lining."

After some other anecdotes of waifs and strays, Mr. Montford pointed out the Ministerial seats or benches to the right of the Speaker, and those of the Opposition to the left, both being, to my great satisfaction, completely filled.

"What is going on now?" I asked, as a gentleman, led by two others, advanced up the floor of the House.

"They are introducing a new member. He is about to take the oaths and his seat."

"How do they swear in a new Parliament?"

"I'll tell you. In the case of swearing in of the members of a new Parliament, the Speaker sits from twelve to four o'clock every day for a week, after the assembling of Parliament, for the purpose of administering the prescribed form of oath. On the first day the counties and boroughs are called out alphabetically, and any of the members for each place as it is named who happen to be ready present themselves at a long-drawn-out table, and range themselves, schoolboy fashion, along its sides. A number of oblong pieces of cardboard, on which are printed forms of the oaths, are then produced, and one of them is distributed to each member. A corresponding number of Testaments are then handed round to the members to be sworn, after which the clerk reads aloud the form of words constituting the oath, and the representatives of the people repeat them after him in all sorts of tones. As soon as prayers are over every day the Speaker calls, 'Members to be sworn to come to the table.' That is the operation that is going on just now, and the reason the new member is so lustily cheered is because it has been a hot and sharp party contest, pluckily fought. It must be Mr. Bentham, a Liberal gain, as the jubilation is all on the Government side of the House."

"How is a division operated?"

"Oh, easily enough. You will very possibly witness its inception this evening. As soon as the moment arrives when it is the pleasure of the House to try the question by this test, the signal is given by the Speaker calling out, 'Strangers must withdraw!' This order is obeyed only by the occupants below the bar and the gallery just over the Clerk, both of which are actually within the House. The occupants of this, the Strangers' Gallery, are permitted to keep their seats. As soon as the order to withdraw is given, a two-minute glass is turned by one of the clerks, in order to give time to members dispersed all over the building to occupy their seats. As soon as the sand has run out, the doors are closed and locked by the Sergeant-at-Arms, and all late-comers are excluded. The Speaker then puts the question, and after having declared which side, in his opinion, has the majority of voices, his decision is questioned by some member, and he then gives the direction, 'The ayes to the right, the noes to the left;' and the former file out of that door at the back of the Chair; the latter pass up the gangway, or open space on the left there—the Opposition side—and out at a small door at this end of the House, on the left, which we cannot see. The Speaker then orders two 'tellers' to each door, and one of them reports to him that 'the House is clear.' The members, thus driven out of the body of the House, find themselves in a long corridor; and at the end of this corridor is a railing and a desk, between which sufficient space is allowed for one person to pass at a time, after the manner of the pay-places at theatres. On one side of these stand two 'tellers'—one of each of the parties then voting against the other—and two clerks, both of whom are provided with printed lists of the names of all the members of the House. As each member passes through the teller counts him—he himself usually calls out his name—and the clerks tick it off on the list, with a view to its being inserted in due course in the division lists, which are printed every morning with the Orders of the Day. The members then return one by one to the body of the House, the ayes entering at the principal door below the bar, and the noes by the door at the back of the Speaker's chair. When all have passed, the tellers make up the figures, and all four advancing to the table, one of those on the winning side in a loud voice declares the respective numbers.

"There is a type of the young member, of whom a great deal is expected," observed my invaluable friend, pointing toward a careworn-looking young gentleman, with disordered dress and unkempt hair, who was engaged in making copious notes from some passage in a blue book that he fondled on his knee. "There are a dozen or so in the House. They come to nothing, as a rule. That man—I forget his name—says some smart thing at a public dinner about the Duke of Wellington being a charlatan, or Bismarck an idle dreamer, and the very novelty of the assertion arrests attention. A vacancy occurs in his county, and he is put up. He gets through the preliminary ordeals pretty well. Of course he is too clever to make good hustings speeches, and there is a vague feeling of disappointment in the county concerning him, but he is sent triumphantly to Westminster, and the county, quietly triumphant and expectant, saying, as it were, 'Wait till our young lion roars in earnest! See how he will rend the other lions, young and old alike!'

"But the roaring takes some time. The forms of the House have to be carefully noted; success must not be endangered by any foolish hastiness; and, to do him justice, the sucking member is not hasty. He attends the House with exemplary devotion; he even attends prayers, so that he may have a seat assured to him should he perchance suddenly wish to confront an enemy on the other side, and vanquish him in debate. With unexampled trouble, he gets on a committee, and asks a shrewd question or two that evinces the grasp he has taken of the subject in hand.

"So one session goes past, and he leaves town still undistinguished from the common herd. He bides his time, say his admirers. Wait till next session! Alas! next session, when at length he catches the Speaker's eye, and rises with a tremendous sense of responsibility to address the representatives of the kingdom, his innate dullness entirely cancels and covers over his knowledge of the subject; and his priggishness wearies, while his pertinacity ends by offending the House. Leaders of his party say to each other, 'He won't do'; while the word 'bore' is marked against his name by the whole assembly, and he is doomed. That young fellow is one of the doomed ones, and a type. As he gains confidence, he insists on letting the world—through the reporters—know what he thinks on very many subjects, until at last even these long-suffering gentlemen begin to put him off with that terrible sentence, 'After a few remarks from Mr. ——.' Look well at him, and carry his image in your mind's eye on the ferry across the pond."

The Treasury and Opposition benches being now pretty well filled, Mr. Montford continued:

"Take a good look at the greatest man of the age, a living wonder," said Mr. Montford, as my eyes instinctively fell upon Mr. Gladstone. "He is Prime Minister and Chancellor of the Exchequer, holding both high and mighty offices. See the fine mouth, the massive nose, the compact head. What thought is expressed on that brow. What a mine of masterful ideas is lying in wait beneath those sparse silver locks! What a bitter pill it was for old lady Victoria to have to take him to her bosom, poor thing, and to relegate to outer darkness the Juggler of the Jingoes, who made her an Empress, by Jove! In his time, Gladstone has played many parts; his present leap into power is politically dramatic. He will pull down a church, as he did the Irish Establishment, or fell a tree; write an essay on the Diophantine Analysis, or a Greek poem on a postal card. The great issues now at stake will be handled by a very Titan. Watch him smoothing his hat—it's a favorite occupation. I heard him speak two hours once, and he kept rubbing a new hat all the time, and the wrong way. Fancy, he was born in 1809. He's a Liverpudlian. In a fit of indigestion he threw up the reins of power in 1874. Disraeli said there was nothing like it since the bankruptcy of Overend & Gurney, a bank that everybody thought as firm as the Bank of England. Gladstone does as much writing per diem as a dozen of our Civil Service clerks put together. At Eton and Oxford he was a great worker. He is a profound Greek scholar, and his leisure hours, save the mark! are devoted to Homeric translations. Everybody knows everything about him, so we'll pass on to that handsome, florid, stout, bearded man behind him. That's the Right Honorable Hugh Childers, Secretary of State for War. He was "Comptroller of the Queen's Navee" when the Liberals were in office, and made a pretty good Lord of the Admiralty. During his term of office his eldest son was lost in the training-ship that keeled clean over off the Isle of Wight. He has not much backbone, but he'll do. In 1872 he became Agent-General of Victoria, and also Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster. His re-election on that occasion is memorable as the first instance in England of a political election by ballot. He paid you all a visit in '75, and is very warm in his praises."

Mr. Gladstone here conferred with Mr. Childers, and my friend rattled on:

"You see, or rather you cannot see, the Marquis of Hartington's face. See, he sits thrust between Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Forster. His hat is so balanced on the bridge of his nose as to conceal his face. His arms are folded and his legs are crossed. This is his attitude. He is the eldest son of the Duke of Devonshire, and heir to ever so many castles and a couple of hundred thousand a year. It was John Bright who proposed him for the leadership of the Liberal Party in '75. With more elegance than metaphor, the great tribune observed that a few strawberry leaves, meaning the ducal flower, would make the party smell sweeter in the nostrils of the English. Lord Hartington is as lazy as lazy can be. He cares little for office, the drudgery of which is most distasteful to him. When Chief Secretary for Ireland he was never seen to open a dispatch. The Duke of Beaufort, the noble duke who goes fishing in your waters with Sothern, the actor, and Florence, once asked Hartington, 'How on earth do you get through your work?' 'I don't,' replied the marquis—and yet he *does* work, somehow. The Duke of Argyle once christened him the 'late' Marquis of Hartington, and the marquis is—well, not as punctual as Queen Victoria. You know," continued my coach, "that he got into a scrape in your country at Washington, by wearing a secesh decoration at a ball. He wore it because a lady

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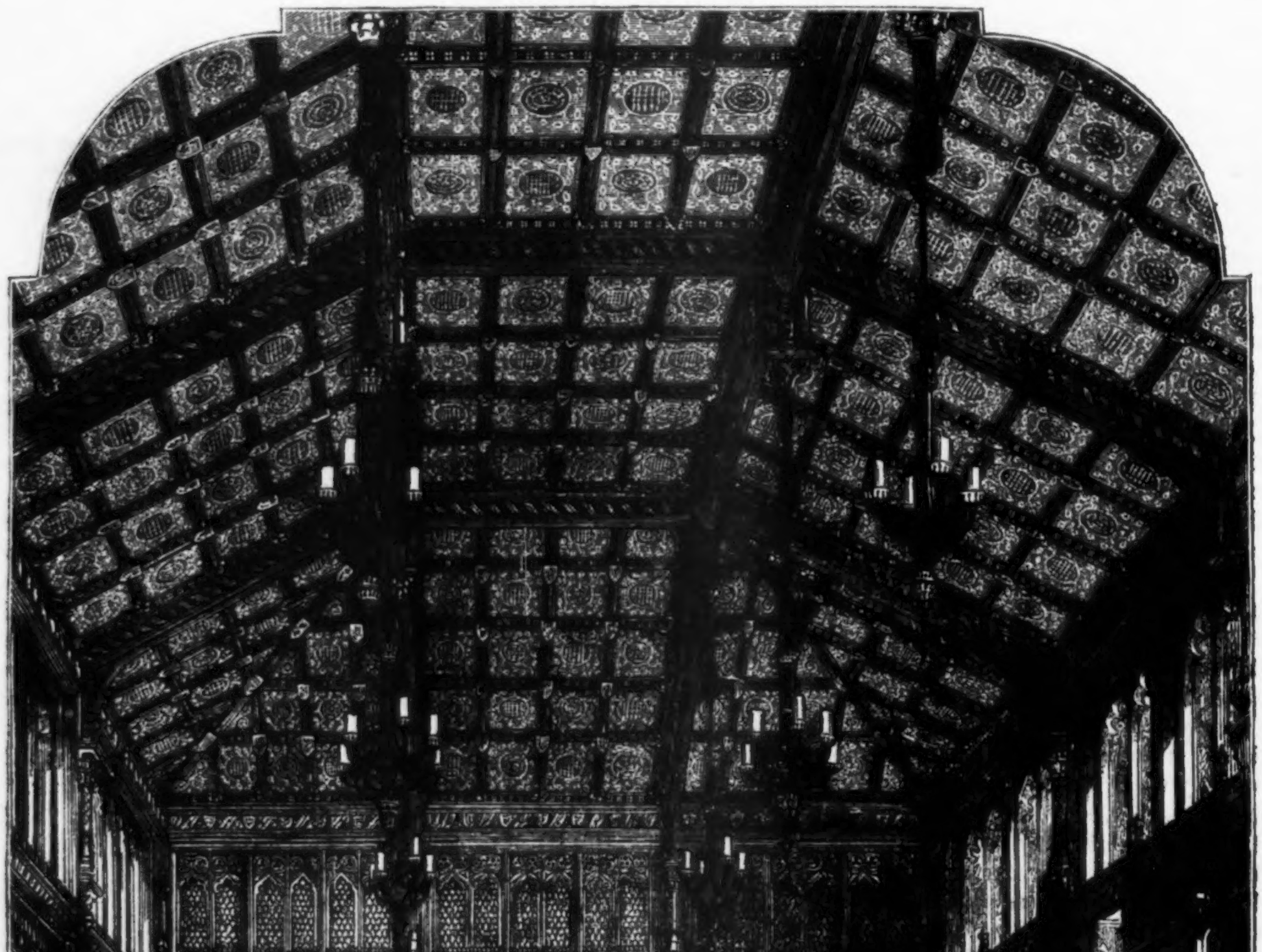
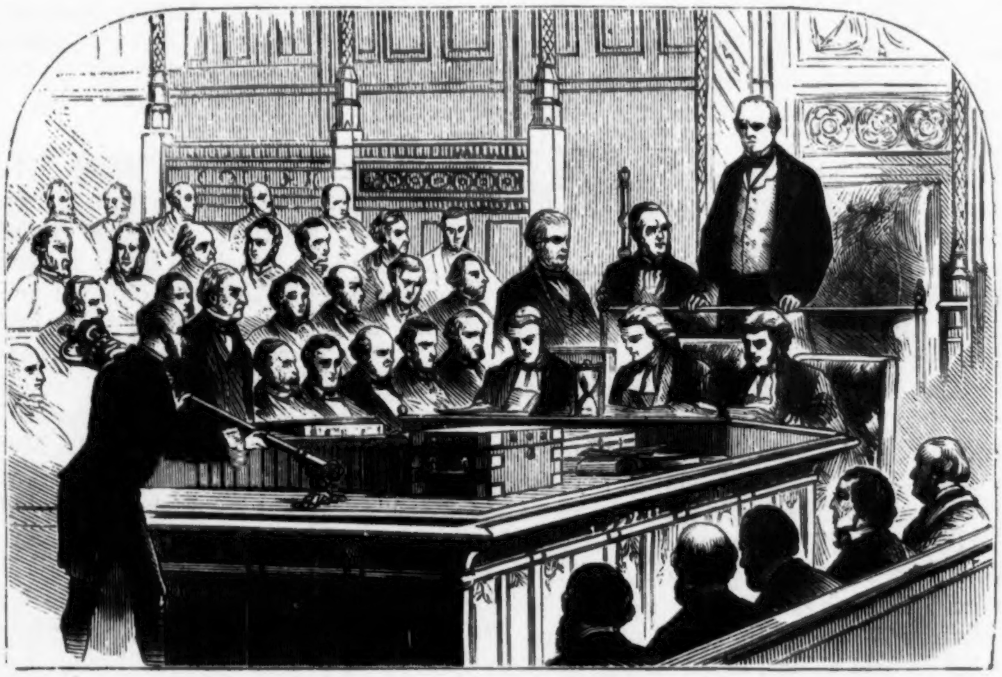
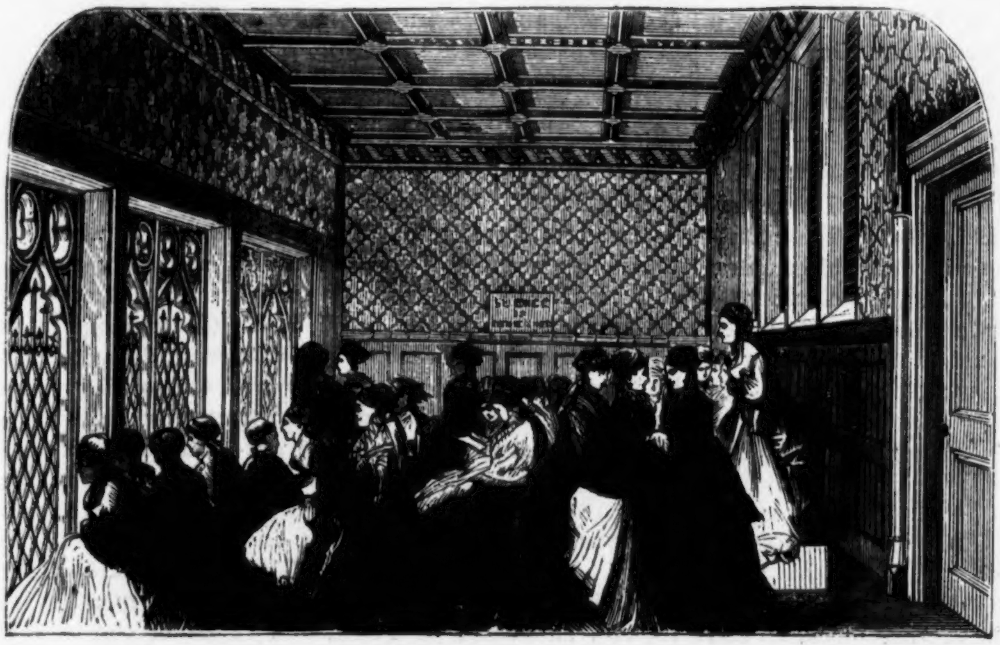
had given it to him, and he did not know its significance. I hope he will speak to-night, for he is up in the art of 'thinking on his legs,' as Bishop Wilberforce has pronounced to be the beginning and the end of oratory. He could have gone into the Upper House, but has refused more than once. He would like to have been leader in this Parliament, but he is wise enough to feel how weak he would be, nay, how ridiculous, with Mr. Gladstone in the ranks. This he told the Queen, who, *bon gré, mal gré*, had to send for Gladstone. The marquis is forty-seven years old, and has escaped matrimony.



THE HOUSE OF COMMONS IN SESSION.

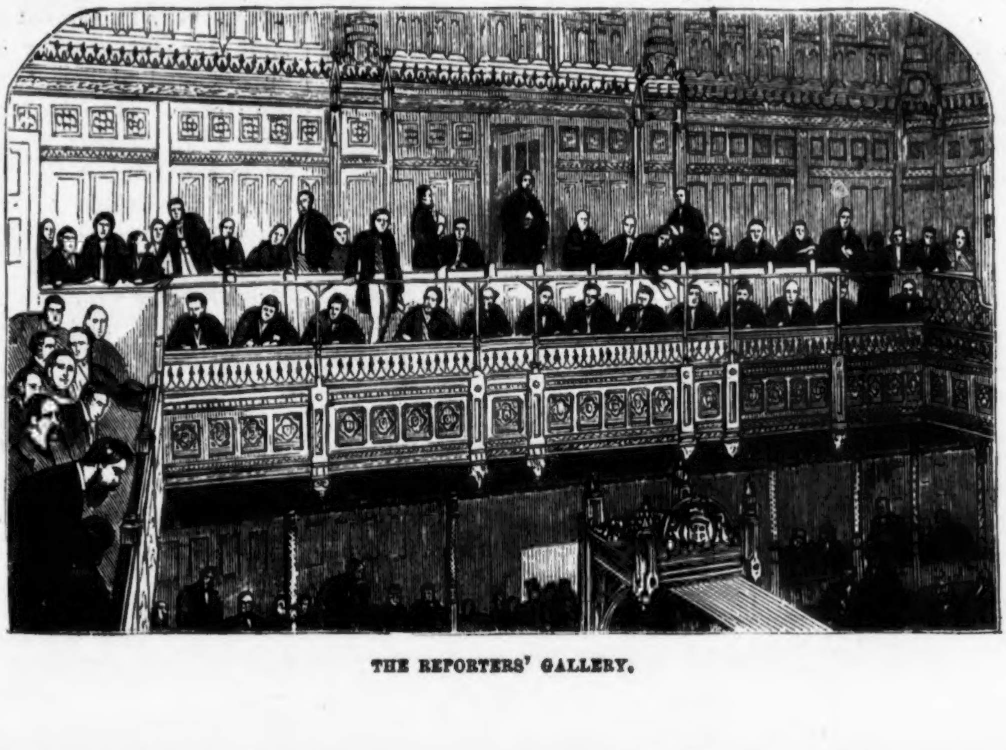
"I want you to look at the new Chief Secretary for Ireland, William Edward Forster. You know him well in your country. Forster is a first-class man. He is what you would call 'solid,' and very square. He is member for Bradford, in Yorkshire, the great seat of the alpaca manufacture. He was Under Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1865–6. He passed the Education Bill through Parliament in 1870, and was sponsor for the Ballot Act of 1872. By Jove, how the Irish landlords must bless him for that! What a resolution! All the swells who commanded counties and held packed boroughs swept out like old shoes! Forster has written a vindication of William Penn against Lord Macaulay's charges. He will be very acceptable to the people of Ireland, as he was a great worker during the awful famine of '46–7, being one of those appointed for the distribution of relief. Gladstone thinks immensely of him.


INSTALLING A NEW SPEAKER.


THE LADIES' GALLERY.

"Ah, here comes John Bright!" exclaimed Mr. Montford, as the great tribune entered, bowing to the Speaker as he passed beside the chair. "There is no English public man so well known on your side of the pond as Bright. He is, as you are aware, a Rochdale man, and is in his sixty-ninth year. He prefers salmon-fishing to politics, and the Tay-side to the Treasury benches. If he only had Cobden beside him now! He is Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, one of those mysterious offices that give a man a seat in the Cabinet, and—nothing to do. I need say nothing more about him. How rosy and well he looks! and in what fighting condition! He is a tower of strength to Gladstone, though they don't *always* agree. What a wise man he was to fling over all business eight years ago, when he felt the strain on his brain, and take to the rod and stream! Where would he have been to-day, if he had clung to work? Quote this example in America, where you never stop till the 'grim sergeant' arrests you!

"That man beside Bright is the Right Honorable James Stansfeld, President of the Local Government Board. He was born in 1820, and was a Lord of the Admiralty in 1863–4, but had to resign, owing to complications arising


THE REPORTERS' GALLERY.

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from his intimacy with Mazzini. He has held office since, and is a man of parts. If Garibaldi don't get him into hot water, he'll do good work for his name and his fame.

"That's Sir Henry James, the Attorney-General. He made his name on the Judication Bill, in 1872, and was made Solicitor-General and Attorney-General the same year. We always knight our chief law officers of the Crown."

To a question put by Sir Stafford Northcote Mr. Gladstone rose to reply, and oh, what a sweet, silvery voice! exquisitely modulated, and every word reaching me like a note in music.

"The rest of Mr. Gladstone's ministry are up-stairs—I mean in the House of Lords: the Duke of Argyle, Earl Granville, Earl Kimberley—he was Lord Lieutenant of Ireland during the Fenian business, and, from being Baron Wodehouse, came back to these shores a 'belted earl.'

"Oh, by Jove! I was near forgetting the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Sir William Vernon Harcourt. There he is, that aristocratic-looking, admirably well-dressed man folding a roll of papers. He is a debater of the keenest ability, bitter, biting, sarcastic, while his eloquence is bright and glittering. He is a member for the University of Oxford, and one of the best educated men in England. He is married to a daughter of John Lothrop Motley. He might have been Lord Chancellor, but his present office enables him to strike out from the shoulder. There is nothing he would like better than to tackle your Evarts on the fishery question. Now, let us take a glance at the Opposition.

"That bearded man with the good-natured face, although he endeavors to look sour and crabbed, is Sir Stafford Northcote. He is one of the most amiable men on earth, and dearly loves 'Pickwick.' In fact, they say he knows it off by heart. The Obstructionists nearly broke his heart last Parliament, and he's not done with them yet. He is an able man, but as weak as water As you are aware, he was Chancellor of the Exchequer under Beaconsfield, and leader of the House of Commons. That other spectacled man near him, pale and 'snappy' looking, is the Right Honorable Richard Assheton Cross, Beaconsfield's Home Secretary. He beat Gladstone in Southwest Lancashire in '68, and Dizzy took him under his wing from that moment. He is an able debater, but his temper gets away with him at times. Whilst in office, he was under the thumb of his master, but now he will strike out on his own proper account.

"That tall, finikin-looking man, slight and bearded, is Sir Michael Hicks Beach. He was Chief Secretary for Ireland, and subsequently made room for Jemmy Lowther, while he stepped into the higher office of Secretary of State for the Colonies. He is a wasp, and stings as deeply as he can. Cold, supercilious, arrogant, vain and deceitful, one of the Obstructionists, Mr. O'Donnell—see him over there behind the Speaker's chair, with a glass stuck in his eye—gave Sir Michael the biggest dressing last session that it was possible for one man to give another in this arena. Sir Michael has never spoken above a whisper since. He'll get roughly handled this session, or I'm out of my calculations.

"That white-haired young man, with the florid complexion, is the ex-Attorney-General, Edward Gibson. He represents Trinity College, Dublin. The bald-headed young man leaning over to talk to him is the Honorable David Plunkett, grandson of Ireland's great orator. This young fellow, who was recently appointed Paymaster-General, has a very piquant stutter. He is very eloquent, and exceedingly witty.

"There's *Admiral Porter, K.C.B.*, alias William Henry Smith, ex-First Lord of the Admiralty, *at* whom 'Pinafore' was written. He is a very able man, and has filled many offices with signal, solid ability. He is a great worker. You are aware that he is head of the firm of W. H. Smith & Sons, who control the bookstands at all the railway stations. Mark what a grave, thoughtful-looking man he is, and with what care he is perusing that letter. The other ex's are not worth much, so we'll take a turn at the Home Rulers."

A violent outcry from the direction of the Opposition benches attracted my attention. It was a note of defiance from the Obstructionists, as Mr. Parnell gave notice of a motion on the question of fixity of land tenure in Ireland. When the uproar had subsided—for there were cheers and counter-cheers—Mr. Montford took up the running:

"All those members who sit on the Opposition benches, but below the gangway, are the advanced section of the Home Rule Party, the party who are for the policy of exasperation. There is Parnell. You see, Finegan and O'Connor Power are both consulting him. Do you see that man with the white beard and great bushy brows? that is the O'Gorman Mahon. He is member of the County Clare, and was in Parliament before half the men in this House were born. He was the great henchman of Daniel O'Connell, and has fought more duels than any living man. He handed Mr. Egerton, one of the greatest swells in the House, his card one night during the last Parliament, because Mr. Egerton spoke to him in a way that he didn't quite like; and if the other had sneezed, the O'Gorman Mahon would have had him out at fifteen paces. His cousin, Purcell O'Gorman, the Mayor, was *the* great gun in the last Parliament. He weighed about what you Americans would call three hundred and fifty pounds, and his 'hear! hear!' was like the booming of artillery. As brave as a lion, he bearded the Government as no other man, not even excepting Mr. Parnell, dare do. But he is out in the cold; he fell out with the publicans, and another man sits in his place. Do you see that small man with the thin curly hair and the tight-buttoned frock coat? See, he has a sparse black beard and small, black, twinkling eyes. That's Mitchel Henry, the man for Galway. He owns one-half of Connemara, and has built a castle by the side of a lonely lake called Kylemore, that cost him over a hundred thousand pounds. He is greatly liked in Ireland, and John of Tuam, the 'Lion of the Fold of Judah,' swears by him. His fortune is immense. That jerky-looking, slight man, almost bald, and very white, whose every movement is nervous, is A. M. Sullivan, *the* most eloquent speaker amongst the Home Rulers. His impassioned address, 'acrobatic eloquence,' always fetches the House. He is married to a countrywoman of yours. That low, thickset, high-backed, bearded man to whom he is speaking is the redoubtable Biggar, the man who turned the Prince of Wales out of the House by virtue of 'espying strangers.' Any member who rises and cries 'Mr. Speaker, I espy strangers,' virtually clears the House of everybody who is not a member. Biggar espied the Prince, and turned him out. Lord, what a row that made at the time!

"That man with the splendid brow and soft calm eyes is W. J. Corbet, the member for the sweet County of Wicklow, the garden of Ireland. He is a poet of no mean order, and as good a sportsman as ever trod the heather. His breed of red Irish setters is considered *ne plus ultra.* That fat, pudgy, pot-bellied personage near is Meldon, a Whig barrister of no account. Ah, there's a man I want to draw your attention to—that tall, lithe, graceful-looking young man with the soft, dark eyes, unfolding a paper. That, sir, is the Lord Mayor of Dublin, the Right Honor-

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able Edward Dwyer Gray, a son of the late Sir John Gray, who brought the Varty water into Dublin. This worthy son of a worthy sire is a very able man, and his election for Carlow was *the* most exciting of all the recent elections, barring Midlothian. That round-faced man, with the spectacles, so good-humored-looking and so well pleased with himself and everybody else—there, you see him beaming on the Sergeant-at-Arms—is Maurice Burke, the member for the City of Dublin. That imperious-looking, handsome personage beside him is his colleague, Doctor Lyons. He supplanted Sir Arthur Guiness, the great brewer—double X, you know—at the last election. That's The O'Donoghue, that magnificently chested man talking to that fat-faced, foolish-looking Count Moore. He was the handsomest man in the House about fifteen years ago, and his pranks in Paris, where he dressed his servants in the imperial liveries, are well known. He married the daughter of a Dublin grocer, a very rich man, Sir John Ennis, who was also in Parliament. This grocer—his son, by-the-way, that pimply faced, gawky looking person sitting in a condition of profound melancholy, is member for Athlone—this grocer wanted The O'Donoghue to come and address the electors for him. 'Come,' he telegraphed, 'and I'll pay your debts.' 'I'll see you d—d first,' was the reply by wire. *Si non e vero e ben trovato.*

"That's Major Nolan over there just behind the Speaker's chair. He's the 'whip' of the Home Rule Party. It was in reference to his election in '74 that the late Judge Keogh made his terrible attack upon the Catholic clergy. That tall, muscular Christian crossing the floor is Phil Callan, member for Louth, who is accused of being in league with the ex-Chief Secretary for Ireland, Lowther. That bald-headed old gentleman laying down the law to Justin M'Carthy is Sir Pat O'Brien. He is son of the late Tim O'Brien, who kept a public-house in Thomas Street, Dublin, called the 'Battered Naggin,' and who was Lord Mayor when Queen Victoria paid her first visit to her beloved Irish subjects, hence his baronetcy. I think I've pointed out all the shining lights of the Home Rule Party. There are a lot of new men, whom I don't know ; indeed, nobody knows what metal they are made of yet. They are all under the banner of Mr. Parnell, and all prepared for wicked fighting. That's Dillon, a son of the late J. B. Dillon ; behind him is T. D. Sullivan, brother of A. M. Sullivan, a ready, able, bold man. That tall man is J. A. Blake, who formerly represented Waterford, took office in the shape of a Commissionership of Fisheries, married money, flung up office, and has got back to St. Stephen's. There's John O'Neil Lever. I wonder will he start a new Galway line of steamers to New York ? That lynx-eyed, dapper little man is Dawson, returned for Carlow Borough ; near him is Sir Joseph Neale McKenna, an able financier, and member for Youghal."

The debate, which I had the pleasure of sitting out, was tame enough. I was exceedingly lucky in hearing Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Bright on the Government side, and Sir Stafford Northcote and Mr. Cross on the part of the Opposition. I was charmed with the eloquence of Mr. A. M. Sullivan—such rhetoric ! and with the *élan* of Mr. O'Donnell. Mr. P. J. Smyth did not speak, but the Honorable David Plunkett did, and his speech was racy. A good number of English members spoke, but they were fearfully dreary, and the blue books and notes consulted would have filled an ordinary-sized room.

It was one A.M. when I returned to the Tavistock with my good friend Montford, and over a couple of bottles of champagne we talked over men and measures, and the splendid housing of the Commons of England.

MYRTALE.

FATAL Love, hapless Love,
Why hast thou thus bound me ?
Why with deadly toils and snares
Ever thus surround me ?
Though with many a specious art
Glycera may woo me,
Lo, Myrtale thou must send,
And thus quite undo me!

Never slave, helpless slave,
Toiling in war-galley,
Wore such adamantine chains
As I do, Myrtale.
Though I strive to break the spell
Which thou weav'st around me,
Glycera must woo in vain—
Thou alone hast bound me.

Other loves, fitter loves,
May around me rally;
At thy coming they must flee,
Queen of Love, Myrtale!
Wild as Adriatic wave
On Calabria dashing,
Brilliant as the blood-red flame
From tall Pharos flashing.

Though thy chain, golden chain,
All my love confining,
Thou hast cast around my soul,
Heed not my repining.
While this bright to-day is ours,
Sorrow, hear our *vale!*
Love and joy and life may be
Bright with thee, Myrtale!

THE ROMANCE OF A ROSE.

"LOOK up, sweet Nell ! Here is something better worth your eye than the most gorgeous flower that you have wrought so subtly with your gay silken thread."

The speaker was a tall, rather meagre-looking young man, with a set face, and closely cropped black hair. His gray eyes were fixed on a young girl whose fair head was bent over an embroidery-frame, and he held in his hand a lovely rose, fragrant and dewy, as if just gathered from some country garden where the glory of the Summer had space to revel. The tint was a faint pink, with a dash of pale yellow like a gleam of sunset sleeping in it.

The young girl, who was in reality rather toying with the embroidery while she seemed to work, looked up with a pair of blue eyes that reminded one of the azure sky flooded with June sunshine outside. She made a quaint but lovely picture as she sat in the high, carved chair, dressed in rich old brocade—faded, but lustrous, and softly tinted with palest blue and cream-color. She wore no ornaments save the lace at her throat and wrists ; but that was old and rich, and pale buff in hue. Her face was full of youthful bloom ; but one could read great capacity for feeling in the soft eyes and full, tremulous lips. Like some long, childish dream, her life had run until within the last month, when her engagement to her cousin Jasper had opened graver possibilities before her, from which she shrank a little, it must be confessed.

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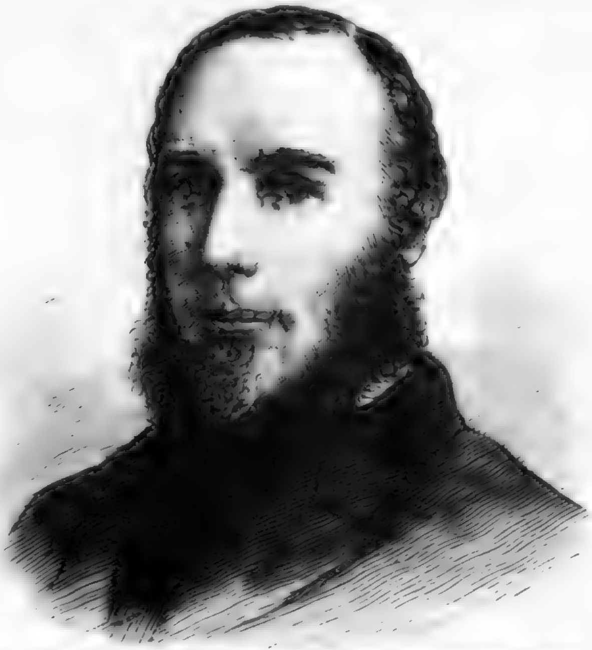
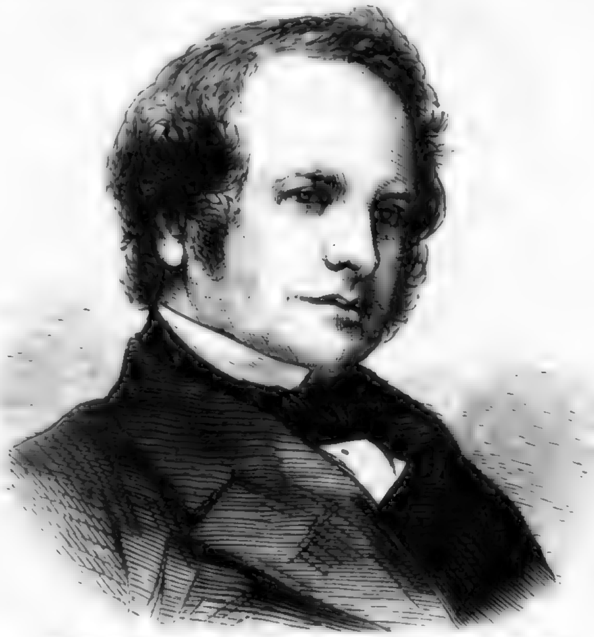


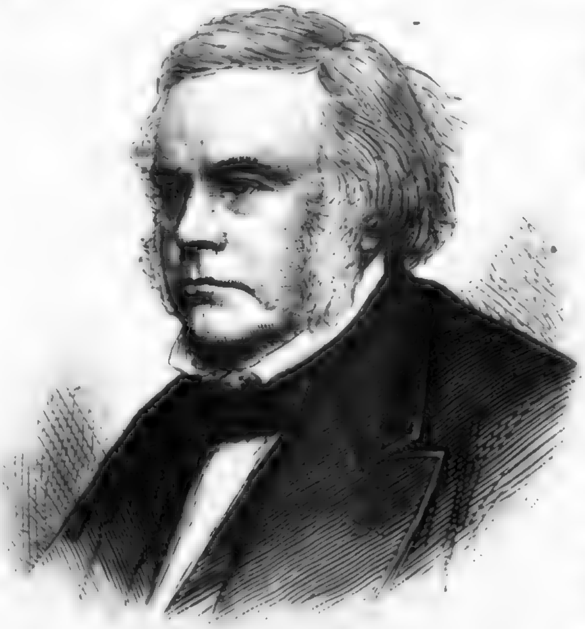
THE BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS.—LORD NORTHBROOK, FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY.—SEE PAGE 1.



EARL GRANVILLE, SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

For this was not a betrothal in which two young hearts had flown together spontaneously, like two young birds; it had been led on by Eleanor's grim father, old Colonel Gwynne, and there was an eye to property to be kept in the family on the part of the frugal parent.

The young girl had not dreamed of opposing this calm disposal of herself—having been educated in the old English style, where the parent's will is law—but lately some solemn questionings had wakened in her heart, and she could not disguise the fact that she rather shrank from the touch of her betrothed, and shuddered at the slightest caress.

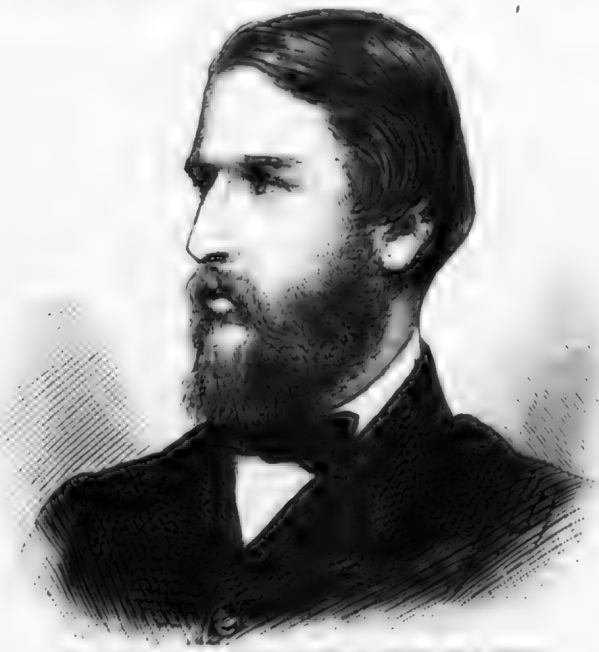


RIGHT HONORABLE JOHN BRIGHT, CHANCELLOR OF THE DUCHY OF LANCASTER.

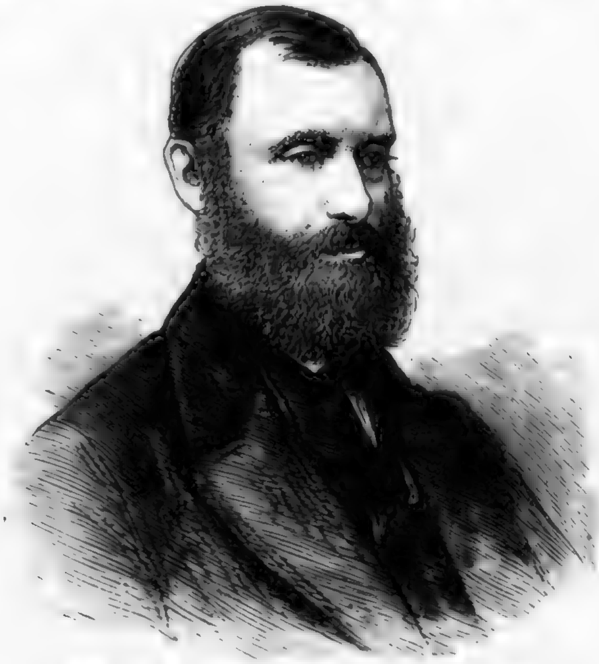
But we have kept the young man standing an unconscionable time with the rose in his hand.

"It is for me, I know!" cried Nell, with a bright glance. "How lovely for my hair to-day! for, you know, Jasper, the soldiers are all to march by this house, and all the gallant Frenchmen who have so nobly fought for us; so I must make myself as charming as possible."

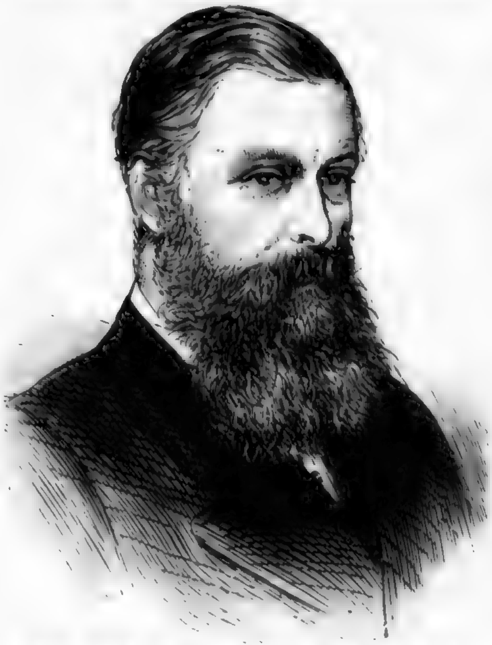
At the words, she had already disposed of the rose, with the grace of a Frenchwoman placing it in the very spot where it was most effective in the shining braids of her golden-brown hair. She made so lovely a picture that Jasper looked grim.



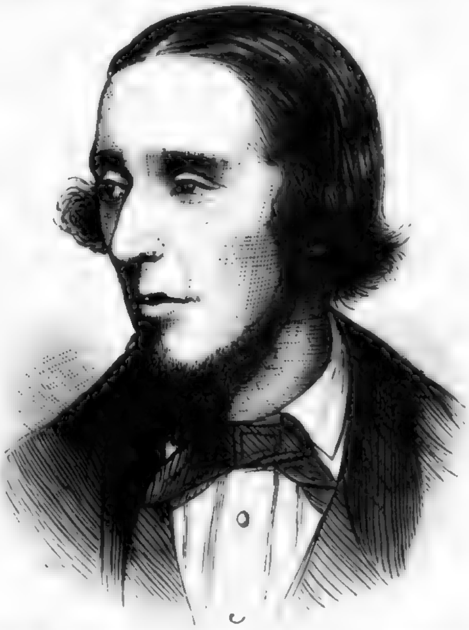
MARQUIS OF HARTINGTON, SECRETARY FOR INDIA.



HON. WM. E. FORSTER, SECRETARY FOR IRELAND.



HON. HUGH CHILDERS, SECRETARY FOR WAR.



RIGHT HONORABLE JAMES STANSFELD, PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

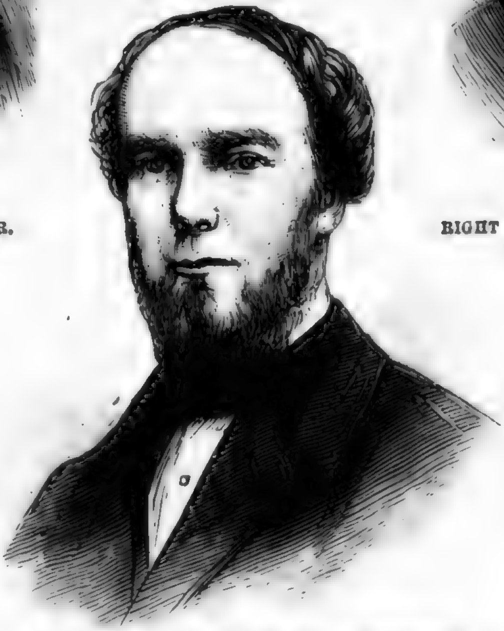
The girl's eyes flashed a little defiantly as she answered:

"I like to please. If that displeases you, cousin, I can't help it!"

"As for the gallant French officers whom you seem disposed to admire for their chivalric conduct," he went on, more grimly, "let me tell you, Nell, it is more spite against England than love for us that gained their help."

"Oh, Jasper, what ugly, cynical views you take of everything!" Eleanor answered, with a pettish gesture, as she began to work again. "I prefer to believe in people, and attribute the best motives to them."

And as she spoke, a coldness seemed to chill her warm, beating heart, as she wondered how

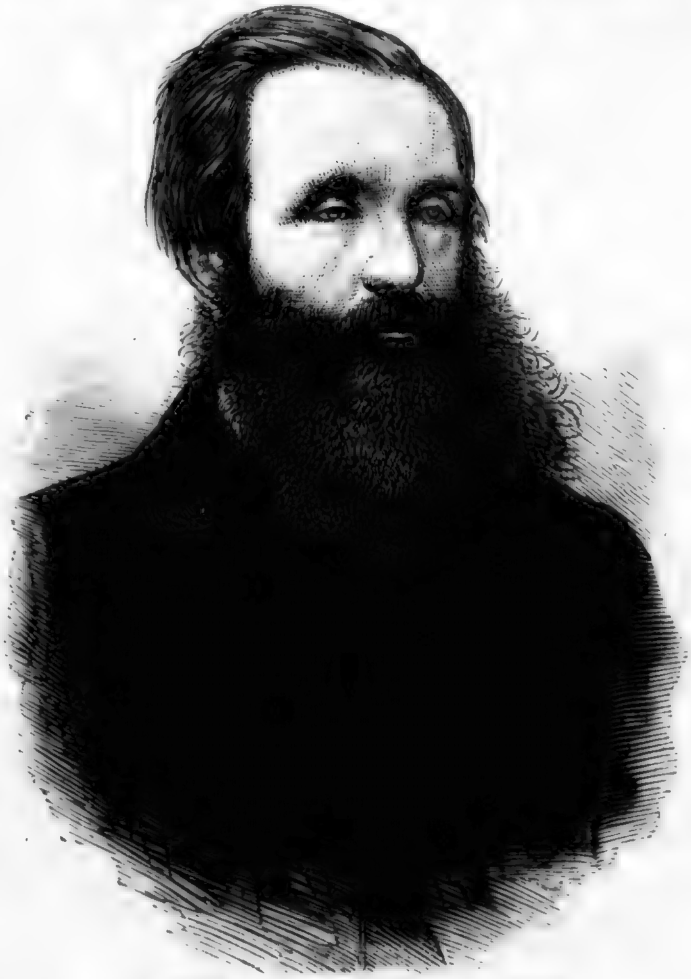


EARL OF KIMBERLEY, COLONIAL SECRETARY.

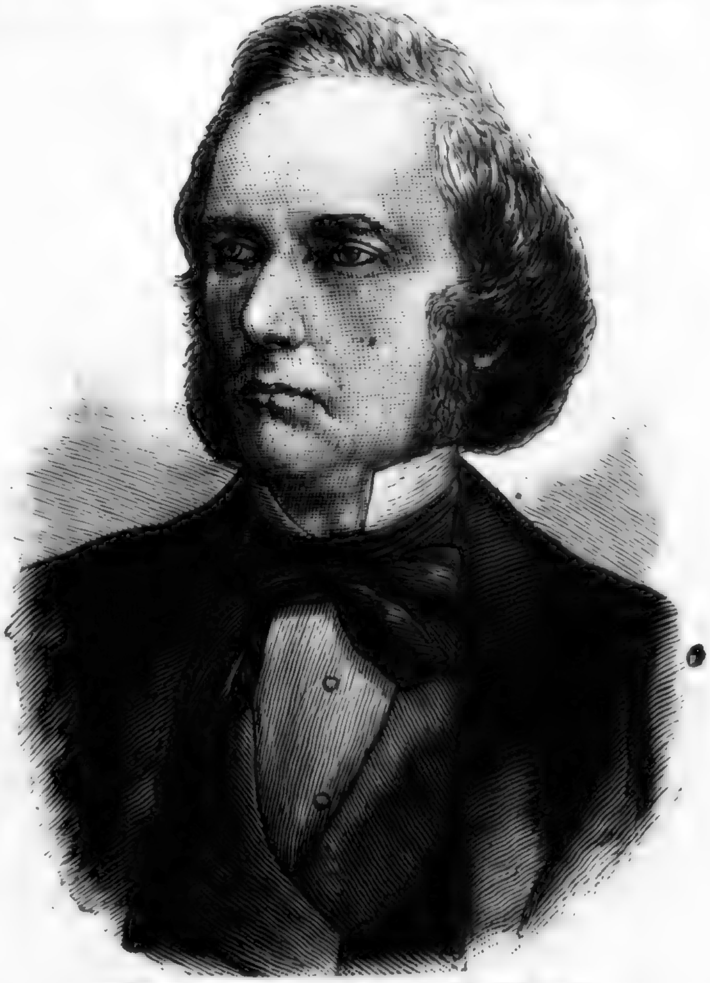
"Why should you care to look so attractive to other men?" he said.

"It's a woman's first duty, always and everywhere, to look as well as possible," she answered, with a merry laugh.

"Do you know, Nell," he went on, with a little hesitation, "that there is somewhat of flippancy in your manner at times, that looks—well, what men call coquettish?"



EARL SPENCER, LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL.



THE DUKE OF ARGYLL, LORD OF THE PRIVY SEAL.

a lifetime would pass with this man, who seemed less congenial day by day.

At that moment the colonel came in for his equipments. He was a tall, strong, muscular man, with iron-gray hair and stern eyes. To see Eleanor near him was like looking at some brilliant, rare exotic that had sprung, by a strange freak of nature, from a cold, gray rock. He felt some sort of pride in his beautiful daughter, however, and there was a kind of light in his eye when he looked at her, like the palest wintry ray of sunlight on a stone wall.

"Billing and cooing, eh ?" he said, with a satisfied smile, as he looked at the two whose future he had so prudently arranged. "Well, that is all right."

"No, father, we are quarreling—that is more the order of the day with us," answered Eleanor, with a saucy smile.

"What ! what !—that will never do. Jasper, you must get the whip-hand," said the colonel, smiling grimly. "In half an hour we'll be marching by, girl. I warrant me you won't miss the sight."

"No, indeed, father," answered Eleanor. "Don't you see my best brocade, and this exquisite rose in my hair ? It's too bad, Jasper, that I should not have been more complacent, after this present."

"Bah ! I do not wish to buy your complacency," Jasper answered, brusquely.

And Eleanor, seated in the gray stone balcony, where, with the carven stone for a framework about her, and the sunshine bringing out her slender, girlish figure in bright relief, dreamed of an ideal lover, of courtly grace and eloquent speech, whose voice would have power to thrill her to the finest fibre of her being.

In fact, this Puritan girl, by the accident of birth, was formed to appreciate the chivalry of a courtly lover, and shrank from the plain speech and uncouth manners of her own. Besides, in truth, she had caught a glimpse—only a glimpse—of a face that had haunted her ever since. Though the eyes had not once rested on her, she could not forget them, nor the highbred, aristocratic air of the man—one of those French officers of whom Jasper had spoken so slightingly.

And while she dreamed, the sound of the drum throbbed through the air, and there was the tumult of many feet. Not with heart-beating and sorrowful presage did the people watch this procession, as in other times when they were going to the battle-ground, where the ranks were rolled in vapor, and the winds were laid with sound.

Ah, to-day it is a triumphal march. The war is over, and victory perches on their banners. The sunlight seems to revel in the sight to-day and make merry over it, as it flashes over the banners and the uniforms, and the breeze wafts the sound of triumphant music far around.

Every window is crowded with spectators, and sometimes the soldiers from the ranks cast a glance or a nod upward to their own beloved ones, whose hearts are throbbing proudly at the sight. The colonel glanced at his daughter as he passed, but her eyes were not on him. She was gazing intently at a gallant French officer, the favorite of all who came in contact with his winning manner, trained to the grace of courts.

And, as if drawn upward by that electric glance, the eyes of the Marquis de Rochambeau were fixed on the most beautiful picture he had seen since he left *la belle France*. The fair, sunshiny head, with the pale rose nestling in it; the beaming eyes, darkly blue with feeling and eloquent with possibilities of passion ; the full, rich, crimson mouth ; the faint rosy flush that poured like a tide over the face as his eyes met hers, with that reverent, adoring look with which the devotee regards his patron saint; the quaint, pale-blue brocade closely fitting her lithe young figure, with its rich lace at the white throat. What wonder that the young marquis uttered his very soul in a look ?

Then something fluttered softly through the air and fell at his feet. He stooped to pick it up, and raised the fragrant missile to his lips with a grace that none but a Frenchman could hope for. It was the rose—Jasper's rose—and as it touched his lips, "the soul of the rose went into his blood," and he cared not what his eyes might say to the fair donor. Whatever they said, she smiled in answer, and the smile lit up her face to rarer beauty.

"I must know her—that Puritan rose," thought the marquis, as they marched on. "It is surely a case of electric affinity. After all, I might do worse than find a wife here. She would not have had the bloom brushed off by gallantry. She would be pure as a dewdrop. That girl is, I am sure, for all one might fancy the dawning of love in those sweet blue eyes."

In the meantime, Jasper had looked on this little episode with a face that seemed carved in stone. What ! his betrothed—his wife, almost—casting love-glances and flowers to another man !—one of those very French popinjays whom he secretly detested, because they possessed a grace which he could never hope to attain. Ah, he could not trust himself to speak. The girl had thrown away his flower, too ; made his own gift the messenger of her favor to another !

Eleanor did not hear her cousin go, being wrapped, in truth, in those sweet and senseless dreams that are so lightly kindled in a young heart. She could have woven a romance—albeit she had seldom read one, but the material is never wanting in youth—if it had not been for the tie which was fast growing like a fetter to her.

As it was, she sat on in the sunshine long after the tramp of feet had died away and the music was hushed. She seemed to fear to lose something of the sweetness of her dream if she moved from the enchanted spot. While she sat in that place she could call up again the dark, sensitive face, the brown eyes full of feeling, the grace of that kiss, wasted, alas ! on the senseless flower, yet winging its way with an electric subtlety through the air, to spend itself upon her perfect lips. She seemed to feel it there now !

But a harsh voice smote upon her reverie like a blow:

"Come in, girl !"

Never had she heard her father's voice so hard and devoid of feeling before.

"Come in ; there is no need of making yourself a spectacle any longer."

She shivered a little, as if all the sunshine had gone out of the June day, as she obeyed. Then, as the meaning of her father's words dawned on her, she flushed, and drew herself up proudly.

"What is the matter, father ?" she asked, quietly, for she saw a darker storm on Colonel Gwynne's face than she had ever seen before, though it was never a sunshiny face at best.

"Matter ? Oh, is it nothing that you make yourself appear like a light o' love in the face of the army—casting favors to French officers, and smiling in their eyes ? A Frenchman, too ! One of our own people might not have mistaken you ; but he ! And you betrothed to a good man, too !"

"Does Jasper complain ?" asked Eleanor, with her face crimson and her eyes flashing dangerously.

"I—I could not enjoy seeing my gift thrown to another," answered Jasper, stoutly.

"I have decided for you," went on the father. "You shall go to your aunt Samanthy's at once—there is, fortunately, a vessel to sail to-night. I met Captain Cook on my homeward way; he is an old friend, and I will send you in his care. There you stay till this blows over, and the officers are gone. Go, girl; not a word—go pack at once! You will not need much frippery, as there are no gallants there."

Too indignant to speak, and trained to silence as she had been, Eleanor swept by the two men like a young queen—not vouchsafing even a passing glance at Jasper, who already half repented the decision which must banish so much beauty from his eyes.

The girl hurried to her own room, and began, in a sort of frantic haste, to lay a few articles together; but long before her work was done she had sunk upon a chair, lost in reverie—this time a painful one. A sudden blight seemed to have fallen on her life—a dark cloud had extinguished the sunshine, and as she glanced out of the window she saw the cloud was not figurative alone, for the sky had grown dark, and one of those sudden Summer storms was gathering over it. She gave little heed to that, however. She was thinking, instead, how did her father dare—how could Jasper insult her in such a manner! Yet, fluttering uneasily in her heart, was a secret feeling that they were justified for it all if they could have read her secret thoughts.

The afternoon grew darker and more threatening, but the colonel was not the man to be lightly swerved from his purpose. He knocked at his daughter's room-door in good time, and announced the carriage ready and waiting. He was softened somewhat by the thought of the parting, and spoke very kindly. Jasper waited below and put her in the carriage, then both accompanied her to the vessel, Eleanor keeping a proud silence. Jasper looked about with some apprehension as they alighted.

"It will be a nasty night, I fear," he said, uneasily. "Perhaps it would be better to defer this visit."

"Oh, no, cousin," answered Eleanor, with something of her old sauciness; "the French officers are still in town—better send me at once where the only beaux are the stupid coast-fishermen, who have eyes only for herring and haddock."

"The *Dolphin* is the trimmest little vessel afloat; I have no fears of her," answered the colonel; "besides, this is only a Summer storm, soon over. Good-by, my daughter," and he leaned down and touched her forehead with his lips, but did not betray the longing he had to take her home with him again; for he knew how the grim old house would seem without the flower that brightened it with Summer bloom.

Jasper did not dare to kiss those lips, curved in such bitter scorn; he only touched the hand, and felt a strange tenderness tugging at his heart that would have unmanned him if he had not turned quickly away.

But the two watched the ship as she sailed out with white sails swelling in the rising wind, and noted that she dipped and rose on the crested waves like some great snowy bird; then they went silently home.

The friendly captain received the young lady in the kindest manner, found the best seat for her, and made her comfortable, when he ascertained she preferred the deck to the cabin. Then he left her, for the gathering storm demanded watchfulness. The wind was growing stronger, and the *Dolphin* flew before it. Now and then a rumble from unseen artillery filled the darkened sky, and a lurid gleam tore open for a moment the bosom of some sombre cloud, and showed a seething sea and many a long rent in the white sails.

But Eleanor drew her warm shawls around her, and scarcely heeded the storm, till the rain began to fall and the thunder crashed above like the crack of doom. Then she made her way to the snug cabin, which had been given up to her.

"It's all right, young lady," said the captain, encouragingly. "We'll weather it all the same. Another day would have given you a pleasanter trip; but who could have guessed this morning?—truly, we know not what a day may bring forth."

Ah! the brave captain scarcely guessed the awful significance of his words, till, at midnight, the ship, struck by a sudden gale, turned over, and all on board were battling at once in the caldron of the sea. There was no light from moon or stars, only a great rush and roar of boiling waves in their ears. There was no chance for salvation, no hope!

Eleanor had fallen into a light sleep when the sounds of terror wakened her, and she struggled up on deck, only to meet the great wave that engulfed the ship—only to utter one cry and an inarticulate prayer as she sank with the rest. But, strange and sweet, in that last moment she saw again the face she had dreamed over in the old balcony, and the eyes beamed with love upon her, and the hands met hers in tender touches, that seemed to lead her up through starry spheres, out of the drenching coldness of the waves, into heavenly gardens, sweet with asphodel, on to the plains of paradise! What matter that it was all the fancy of a wandering brain?

* * * * * * *

The marquis, haunted by the lovely face which had looked down like Juliet from the old stone balcony, was dreaming and planning about meeting the beautiful girl. He lingered about the old house, but never saw any one save an anxious, sorrowful-looking old man, and sometimes a younger one, go out and in. Had it all been a dream? he asked. But no; there was the faded rose, with a lingering sweetness around it still. At last, overcoming his delicacy, he asked the barber over the way, whose great pole rose up in those days like a gigantic stick of peppermint-candy, sufficient for a regiment of schoolboys.

"Ah, the beautiful Miss Eleanor!" answered the barber, "daughter to the grim old colonel—there's no one like her in all Boston——"

"She's away now, I suppose?" asked the marquis.

"Oh, my dear sir, did you not hear of the wreck of the *Dolphin?*"

"Well?" asked the marquis, a sudden pang striking his heart.

"Miss Eleanor was on board and went down, sir; every soul perished! The old colonel is nigh distracted. He was never one of the tender ones, but he grieves as one who won't hear comfort."

The marquis bowed. He did not trust himself to speak.

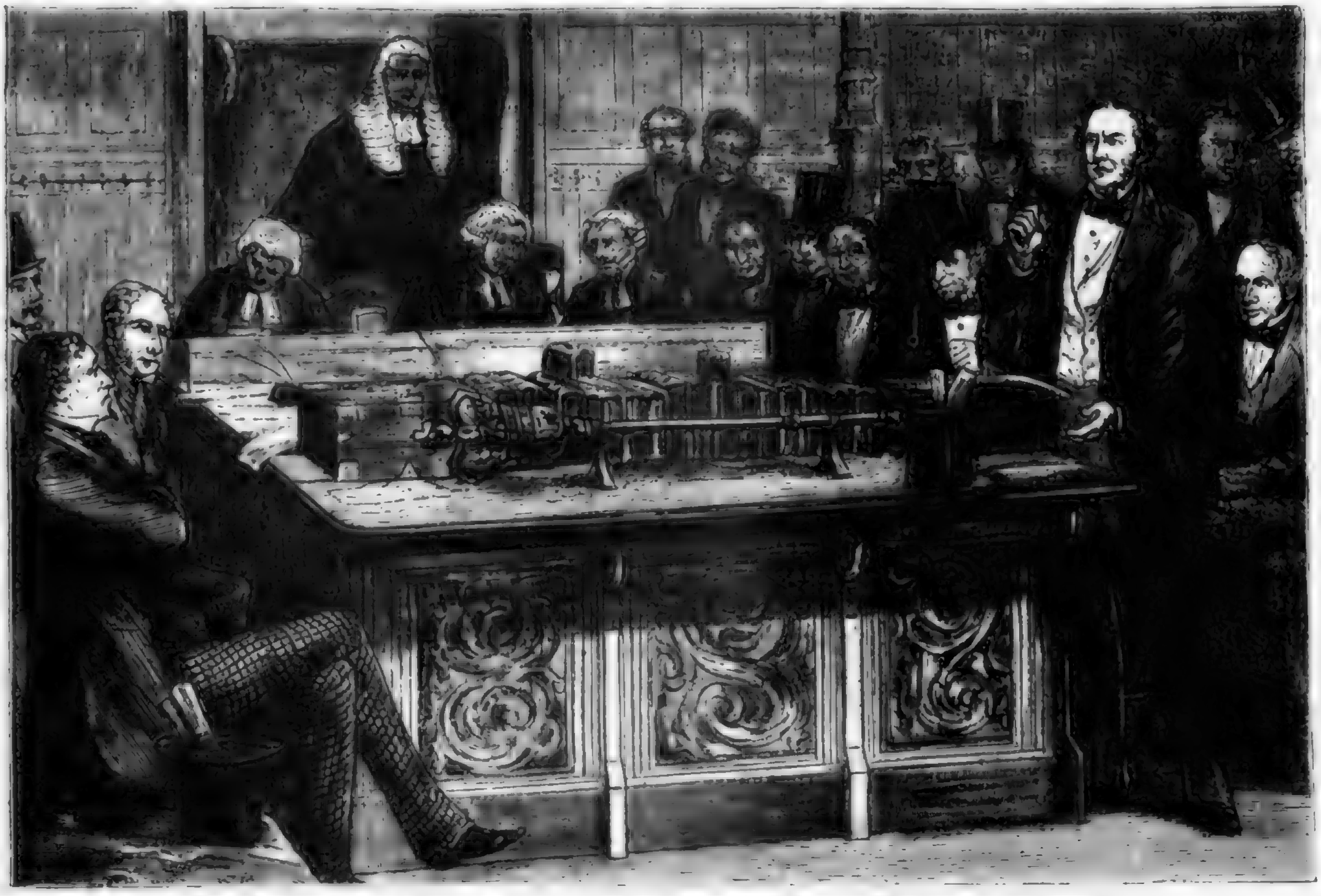
"So my romance is ended," he thought. "It was nothing, after all, but a rose and a smile. But oh! it was a hard fate for so much beauty and youth and tenderness."

But he did not know all, and could not feel the deathless pangs that tortured the two men who sometimes met in the desolate house.

"God forgive us—we sent her to her death!" the old colonel murmured, his face convulsed with emotion. "And yet it seemed best."

And Jasper bowed his head silently, with a wish that he, too, were lying fathoms deep beneath the salt sea waves, for the world had grown very dreary to him.

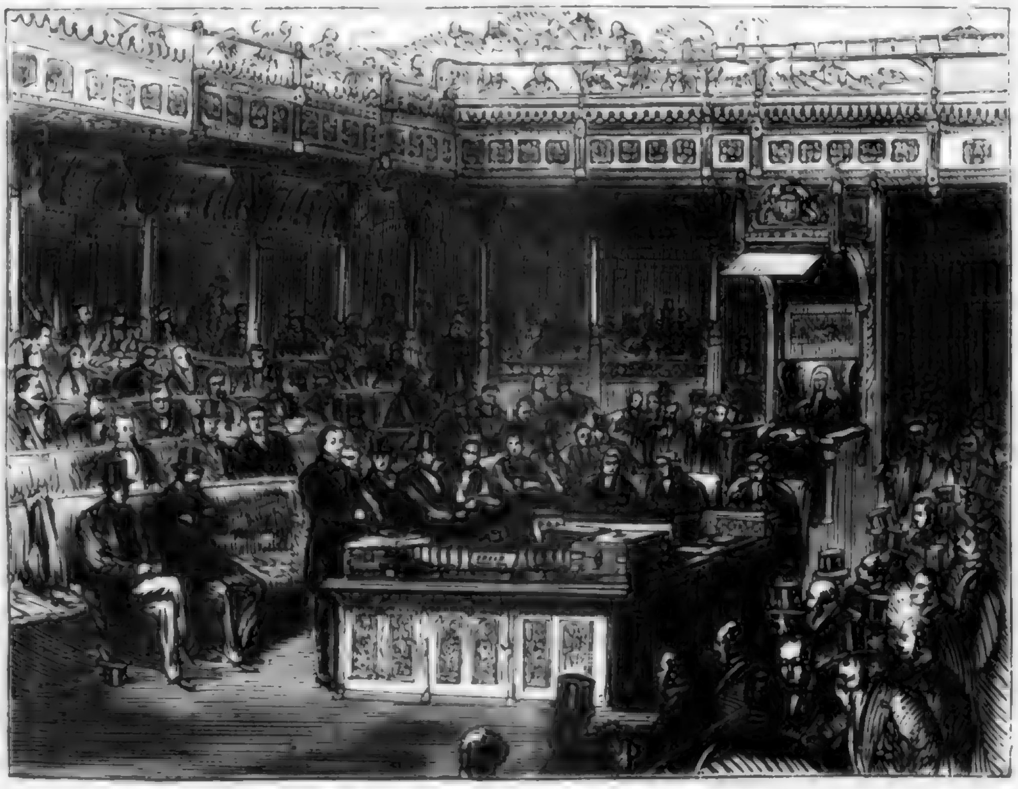
XUM



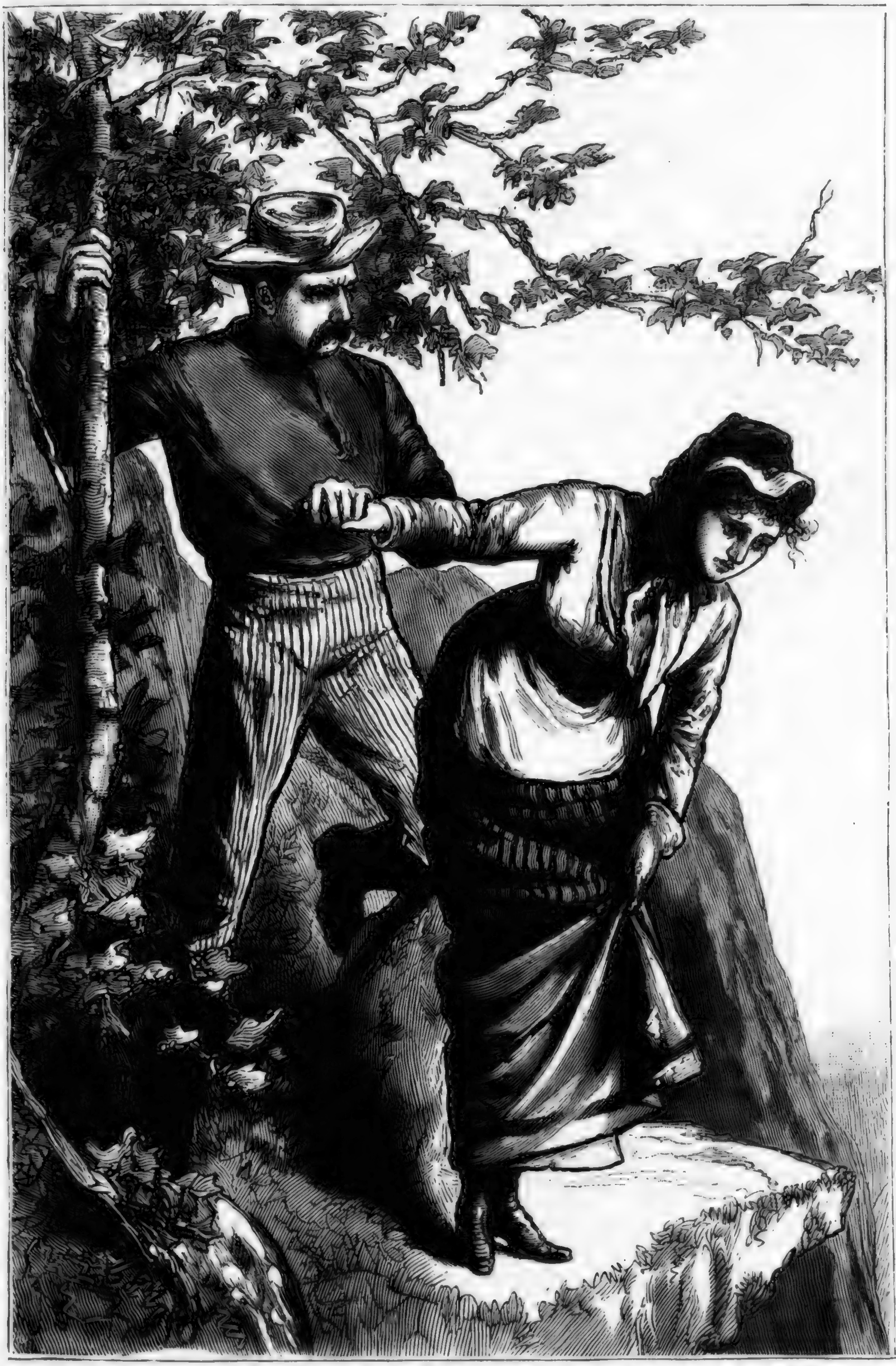
THE BRITISH HOUSE OF COMMONS.—GLADSTONE DENOUNCING DISRAELI'S BUDGET.—SEE PAGE 1.

THE CHEAPEST PLACE IN THE WORLD TO LIVE.

THE Island of St. Michael, the pearl of the Azores group, is about the best place in the world. The climate is soft and agreeable, the scenery lovely, and the people noted for their simplicity and kindness. Labor is very cheap, and consequently the roads leading from the town of St. Michael are of the finest character. The streets are kept marvelously clean. The island is about thirty miles square, and picturesque. One can buy five eggs for two cents, a chicken for twelve and a half cents, beef for three cents a pound and hire a good house for seven dollars a month. You can live well for $600 a year, and handsomely on $700, and in a superb style, keeping carriage and horses, for $1,000. The gardens are beautiful features of the island. In one garden there are 4,000 plants of different varieties. The land is owned by a few rich people, and rents very high. A quarter of an acre brings fifteen dollars a year. The peasants, or laboring people, go barefooted, and live very economically. Probably $100 a year supports a small family. The fashions in dress have not changed within a hundred years, and this applies to the best society. The women wear *copakes*, a garment reaching from the neck to the feet, and bearing some resemblance to the ulster which our ladies wear. The head-covering is called a *capilla*, and is like one of the old-fashioned New England bonnets, but it is attached in some way to the copake. A girl, seeing a stranger approaching, immediately conceals her face with the capilla. The natives, singularly enough, recognize their friends by their feet.



DISRAELI ADDRESSING THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.



TILL THE SUN GROWS COLD.—"ALIXE SEEMS FASCINATED WITH THE TERRIBLE BEAUTY OF THE SCENE BELOW, AND STRETCHES FURTHER AND FURTHER OUT OVER THE BRINK, NOTHING BUT NORMAN'S HAND HOLDING HER BACK FROM ETERNITY."—SEE NEXT PAGE.

XUM

THE MAIDEN'S REVERIE.

Reclined alone within a shady nook,
With wildwood songs the lazy hours beguiling;
Or looking at her shadow in the brook,
Trying to frown—then at the effort smiling;
Her laughing eyes mocked every serious look—
'Twas as if Love stood at himself reviling.
She threw in flowers and watched them float away;
Then at her beauty looked, then sang a sweeter lay.

Then pensive lay in that sweet watered vale,
Where bright the sky, where soft the streams did flow;
Such tones came riding on the musk-winged gale,
The very air seemed sleepily to blow;
And choicest flowers enameled every dale,
Flushed with the richest sunlight's rosy glow;
It was a valley drowsy with delight—
Such fragrance floated round, such beauty dimmed the sight.

The golden-belted bees hummed in the air,
The tall silk grasses bent and waved along;
The trees slept in the steeping sunbeam's glare;
The dreamy river chimed its undersong,
And took its own free course without a care;
Amid the boughs did lute-tongued songsters throng,
And the green valley throbbed beneath their lays,
Which echo chased through many a leafy maze.

TILL THE SUN GROWS COLD.

By K. V. Hastings.

A DEEP, dark forest, grand and calm; great pine-trees looming spectrally out of the gloom; here and there a little rift in the black roof, through which a single star peeps, and winks in innocent mirth at the scene below. Through the stillness a brook murmurs and sighs in ceaseless unrest, being now and then answered by a little brown owl, hooting his sympathy from a far-away stump. Wild azaleas, sweet-fern and spicy ground-pine scent the air. A thick carpet of pine-needles covers the ground, through which tiny bluebells push their heads, shaking them at us the while in constant reproof.

In the midst of all this a bright camp-fire is blazing, sending up a steady stream of sparks. Beside the fire a little hut of fresh-cut poles and green pine-branches, christened "Camp Alixe." This is our hotel, our sole protection from the winds of heaven, from the ravening mosquitoes (rarely getting a chance at town-bred gore), or from the brown bears which our guides laughingly assured us do here swarm.

We are nearly all "townies," born with that passionate love of nature which often gnaws unsatisfied at the city-bred heart. But we, being more fortunate, every season throw aside our trains and panniers, our beaver hats and kid gloves, don short dresses and substantial brogans, and run wild to our hearts' content.

Now we are camped on the side of old "Hawkeye"; for, though we cannot see them through the forest, the beetling crags above which he rears his bald head are not far away.

We have heard of a wonderful ravine in this region—a spot so wild, so weird, so dangerous, that the woodmen themselves have never explored it. Only one young lumberman, Norman Wadsworth by name, has ever been through it. Him we have secured as amateur guide, and through its recesses is he to conduct us on the morrow.

"Sweep!" cries Nellie, snatching up the last card, for there is a casino party just where the light of the camp-fire falls brightest.

"Well, I'll be durned!" meditatively ejaculates Wolf, our landlord, quartermaster, housekeeper—what you will. He it is who provides us with guides, camp-equipage, and such supplies as the trout-stream does not afford nor the shotguns secure. "I'll be durned, Miss Nellie, but you're the luckiest gal I ever did see! Why don't you colonize yourself in Californy? You'd make your fortin there! I ain't goin' to play agin sich luck any more! It's like playin' agin the Old Boy. You'll be askin' me to sign away my soul next. Here, Mr. Walters, you take my hand!"

And rising, with a comical twist on his keen Yankee countenance, he flings down the cards and piles fresh logs on the fire.

The sparks fly up in a fiery column to heaven, and the flames flash forth in new splendor, bringing to light other groups than those gathered around the casino pack. I, Laura, am sitting on a stump, singing to myself, and watching the scene. Just between me and the fire my cousin, Alixe, is lounging on a cushion of moss, while stretched at full length at her feet is our young guide, Wadsworth. Alixe is fresh and fair and lovely, just in the pride of her beautiful young womanhood—a girl whom society has petted, but not spoiled; whose mind travel has enriched, not rendered pedantic; a girl who has seen much and known much, but who is still warm and sweet as when in her cradle.

At her feet, as I have said, lies Norman Wadsworth, his graceful, muscular frame covering a good six-feet-one of ground. He is the handsomest man we have ever seen—straight, clean-cut features, blue eyes, large and deep, straight black hair, and a black mustache drooping low on his square chin.

He is about Alixe's age, but many, many years younger than she in experience. A village school has taught him all his lore—whence comes his beauty no one but his Maker can tell.

Ever since the beginning of our toilsome tramp into the heart of the mountains has he guided Alixe's steps, helping her over and under all impediments, and carrying her—willy-nilly—across all such streams as were not furnished with stepping-stones; and now that our journey's end is reached, he still keeps watch and ward over her, choosing soft places for her to sit, gathering the softest hemlock boughs for her bed, and when this is done, lying sentinel at her feet, his woodman's ax beside him.

The fire ceases crackling, and dies down into a bed of glowing embers. I stop singing, and listen to my cousin and her rustic guardian, which latter, with soft felt hat pulled over his eyes, and flannel shirt rolled back from his throat, leans on one elbow and eagerly questions her.

"Have you ever been in Californy, Miss Dunbar? Seems like I'd like to go there. I read a book about it once."

"Oh, yes. I spent a whole Winter there, and part of a Spring. I like it very much."

"See any grizzlies?" abruptly.

"Only in the menagerie; but I used to hear the coyotes howling at night, and sometimes the wildcats caterwauling in the forest, and once I heard a panther."

"Thunder!" cries Norman. "A panther? What did you do?"

"My horse reared and ran, and I staid on him till we caught up with the rest of the party."

Wadsworth lies still a few minutes and meditates.

"Been in Patagonia?" he finally asks.

"No," laughs Alixe; "that's one place where I haven't been."

"Never been *here* before, have you?"

"No, never."

"Calc'late to come again?"

"Yes, I hope so; it's lovely here."

"I hope so, too," says Norman, quickly and emphatically raising himself on his arm and looking into Alixe's face.

She laughs.

"Do you like to have strangers come here and stay?"

"I like to have *you!*"

Alixe looks up a little embarrassed.

"You're very kind, and you've been very good to me; but I should think it would be a terrible bore to go to such places as this with awkward city people. They always need so much help and get tired so soon. And, by-the-way, Mr. Wadsworth, you must promise not to carry me across any more brooks to-morrow. I'm much too big and too old to be carried, and I want you to let me walk next time."

Wadsworth pushes back his hat and looks at her, amused, yet with a soft, strange smile playing round his lips.

"Why should I promise that?" he asks. "If I did, I should only break my word. It's true you're not very small, and you're not so *very* young; but you're only a gal after all, and I won't let any woman wet her feet wadin' brooks, not so long's I'm able to carry her."

Alixe laughs again, but more gently; and, laughing, throws out one impulsive little hand toward him.

"You're very kind," says she, "but really you must—you must promise, and then keep your word. If you can't do that I must ask somebody else to guide me to-morrow."

Norman's eyes suddenly flash.

"No, you mustn't!" he replies, promptly. "And if you do, them other fellows know better than to put a finger in my pie! Now, don't you worry," he adds, seeing she is a little startled by his sudden energy. "I'll look after you all right." And springing to his feet, he kicks over the water-pail, sending it spinning and hissing into the fire.

"Helloa, Norman!" shouts Wolf; "what in thunder air you 'bout? Was you settin' on a hornet's nest, or a rattlesnake, or what had that bucket done to offend ye? And what air we to drink, seein' there ain't no saloons hereabouts?"

Edmund and Nellie leap hastily out of the course of the little stream, now trickling across their gaming-table, and remove to a place of safety. Wadsworth, assailed by the jeers of his comrades, hastily snatches the pail from the fire and disappears into the darkness to refill it.

Soon the moon rides behind the trees, Venus follows the sun to his resting-place in the west, even the little owl falls asleep. So we all "turn in," and soon are sleeping with our feet to the fire, our dreams haunted by visions of bears glaring at us from the darkness—the snores of our neighbors being dignified by sleeping fancy into ursine grunts and growls.

Finally, morning breaks, fresh and calm and dewy. By four o'clock every bird is shouting forth his joy, every insect humming and buzzing in cheerful unrest. The morning has shed great tears of joy for her new awakening, and they stand cool and sparkling on every tiny leaflet, on every opening flower.

By six o'clock the whole camp is awake; even the laziest —Alixe and I—have rubbed open our reluctant eyes, and betaken ourselves to the brook. There, in a shady spot, under the lee of a moss-grown rock, is a deep, quiet pool, serving us as basin and bath-tub.

"Alixe," say I, looking up from the ice-cold water into which I am plunging neck and face, "Alixe, it seems to me you have a new admirer."

My cousin is fussing up her pretty curly hair, now wet and lank from her morning bath. She looks out with serious eyes from between the dark streamers.

"Do you think so?" she asks, slowly; "whom do you mean?"

"Why, our young guide, of course; but what makes you so solemn over it?"

"Nonsense!" says Alixe, rather irrelevantly; then, after a pause: "Do you really think so, Laura?"

"Of course I do," I reply, staring in surprise at her serious reception of my little joke; "but not enough to hurt him. What makes you so tragic?"

"Oh, I don't know; I thought you were in earnest."

"Pricks of conscience," says Nellie, struggling with the buttons of a new and stiff boot. "Knows herself to be a Lady Clara, and fears that the Vere de Veres never 'with the angels stand.'"

"I'm *not!*" cries my cousin, laughing, yet indignant. "Oh, girls, how can you be such geese! Let's go to breakfast."

And she bounds away in the direction of camp, where our breakfast—trout wrapped in wet brown paper and roasted in the embers—is spread out for our delectation.

An hour later our exploring-party is on the march. At the head of the column are Alixe and Norman, closely followed by me and my guide, then Nellie and hers, then Mr. Wolf and his wife, then the various men-folk comprising the rest of the party. Edmund, my husband, remains in camp with a sprained ankle, and chews the meditative cigar.

Soon we stand on the brink of this marvelous ravine, and look down its precipitous sides at the scene of confusion below. It is an ancient river-bed, plowed deep in the mountain's side. The stream has been narrow and deep, a torrent held in between rocky boundaries, but strong and fierce enough to carry great boulders and masses of jagged rock in its downward course. These, hurled together in desperate *abandon*, now fill the gorge; and between, above and beneath them bounds a fierce mountain torrent, now all remaining of that ancient river. Between and under these rocks are countless caverns, some just large enough to crawl through, some sufficiently lofty to contain tall ghostly cataracts, showering their white spray into chasms where is scarcely a ray of light to illuminate them. And down this gorge we scramble, tumble, climb, slide, any way so that we can explore its most hidden recesses.

Nellie is soon tired, and her guide takes her back to Edmund and the camp. Mrs. Wolf also gives out, and, taking my guide for company, shortly follows Nellie. Mr. Wolf sits down beside a quiet trout-pool, to catch our dinner. The superfluous men have long ago rushed ahead, their shouts being now heard a quarter of a mile downstream, and thus Alixe, Norman and I are left alone.

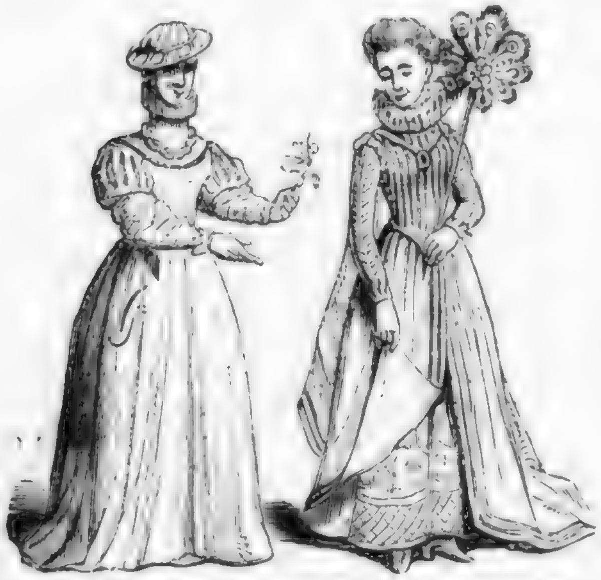
For an hour past I have been watching the other two; not from curiosity, but because matters between them seem to be becoming indeed serious.

My jest of the morning seems now turned to painful earnest; for, from chance words overheard now and then, I know Norman is indeed Alixe's "admirer."

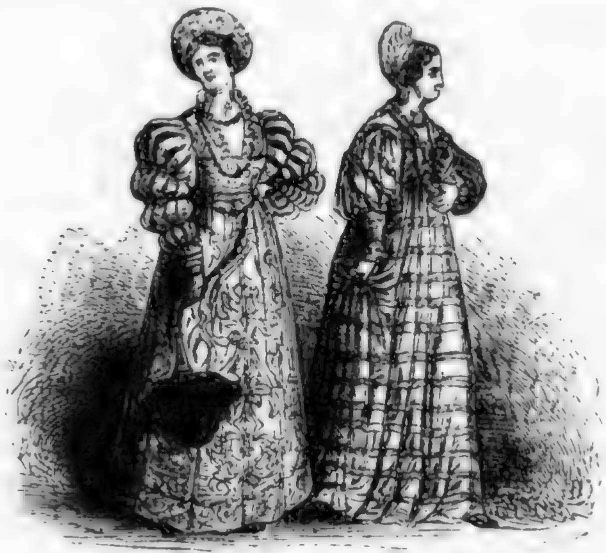
As the morning wears on, her pretty brows become more and more knit in sorrowful perplexity, his blue eyes more and more tragic with desperate entreaty.

He looks so wretched that when we reach a good resting-

XUM



ENGLISH LADY WITH FEATHER FAN, TIME OF HENRY VIII.



MILANESE LADY WITH FEATHER FAN.—SEE PAGE 23.

place—a little shady plateau beside some gurgling rapids—I step away as far as possible, and, turning my back, pretend to hear nothing.

Sometimes the sound of falling water rings in my ears, and no word reaches me; then the shifty wind changes, and brings me all the poor boy's pleadings.

"What is the matter with me?" I hear him ask. "Am I ugly?"

"Oh, no, indeed. You are very handsome."

"Am I stupid?"

"You are bright as can be."

"I'm not poor, you know; I can take care of you right handsomely," says the poor fellow, not knowing how mere a pittance are his paltry hundreds.

"Oh, that isn't it! That wouldn't make any difference."

I look back, and see Alixe leaning against a rock, her soft brown eyes, sad and pitiful, looking up at him, her left arm buried in the mosses and vines behind her.

Norman stands before her, straight, tall, manly, and holds her other hand pressed tightly against his breast.

"Do you think I won't love you enough?" he asks, softly. "Alixe, dear Alixe, you have no idea of how much I will love you. There has never been any woman in all the world—not from Bible times down to these—who has been loved more than you will be, my darling, if you'll only let me."

"Oh, it isn't that!" cries the poor girl, tears running down her pale cheeks. "I *know* you would be ever and ever so kind to me."

Norman starts as though stung.

"Kind isn't the word," says he. "I said I'd *love* you, Alixe."

"Forgive me, that's what I mean. I *know* you'd love me. But what can I do? I don't love you, and I don't believe I ever should."

"Don't mind that!" cries Wadsworth, eagerly; "don't let it make any difference that you don't care for me now. When you find how much I love you—you can never guess how much, Alixe—you will love me after a time. God takes no better care of the stars in heaven than I will of you, Alixe. I shall never think anything too hard or too tiresome to do for you, my darling, if only you'll let me try."

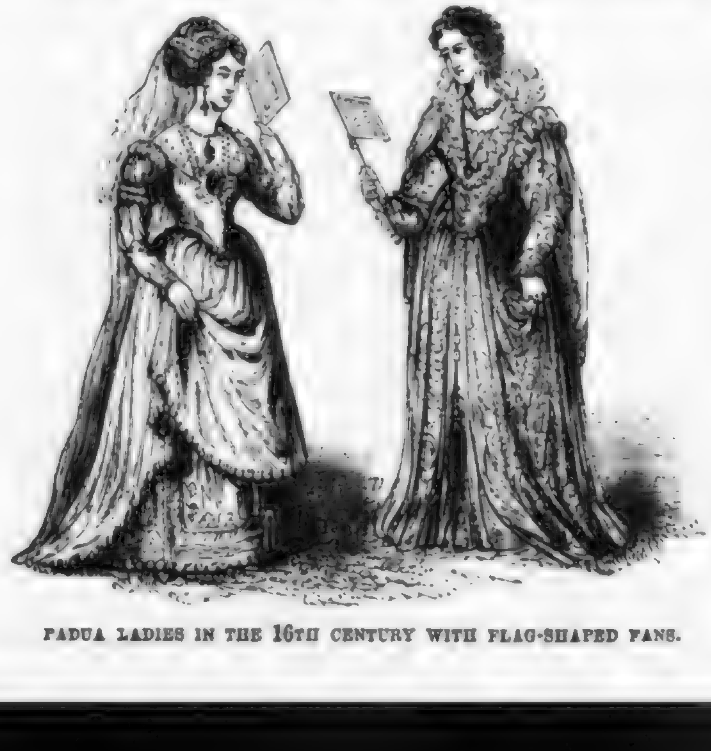
And he gently draws her head to a resting-place on his bosom, while the great tear-drops fall from her eyes and plash on the quivering ferns below.

She rests there for an instant, then tears herself away.

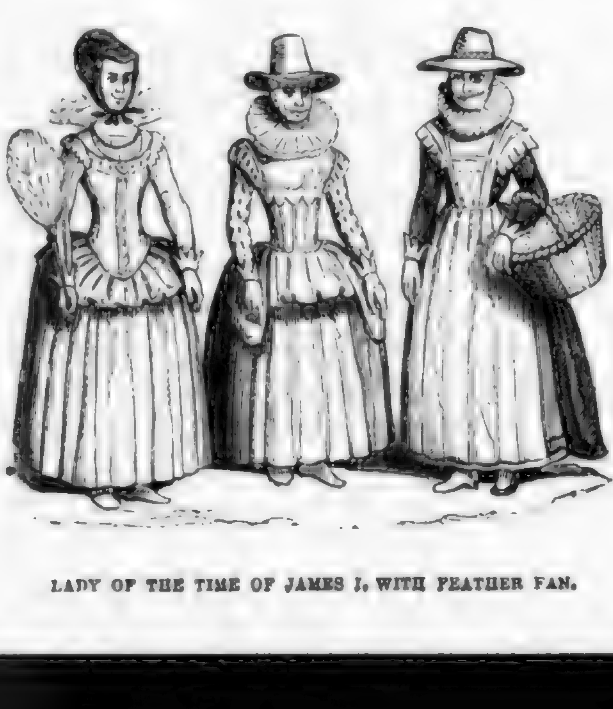
"Oh, I mustn't!" she cries; "it's wicked in me to listen to you. No! no! don't touch me!" as he again starts forward. "Listen, and let me tell you what I mean."

He leans back against the rock, folds his arms, and waits—his tragic blue eyes searching her face.

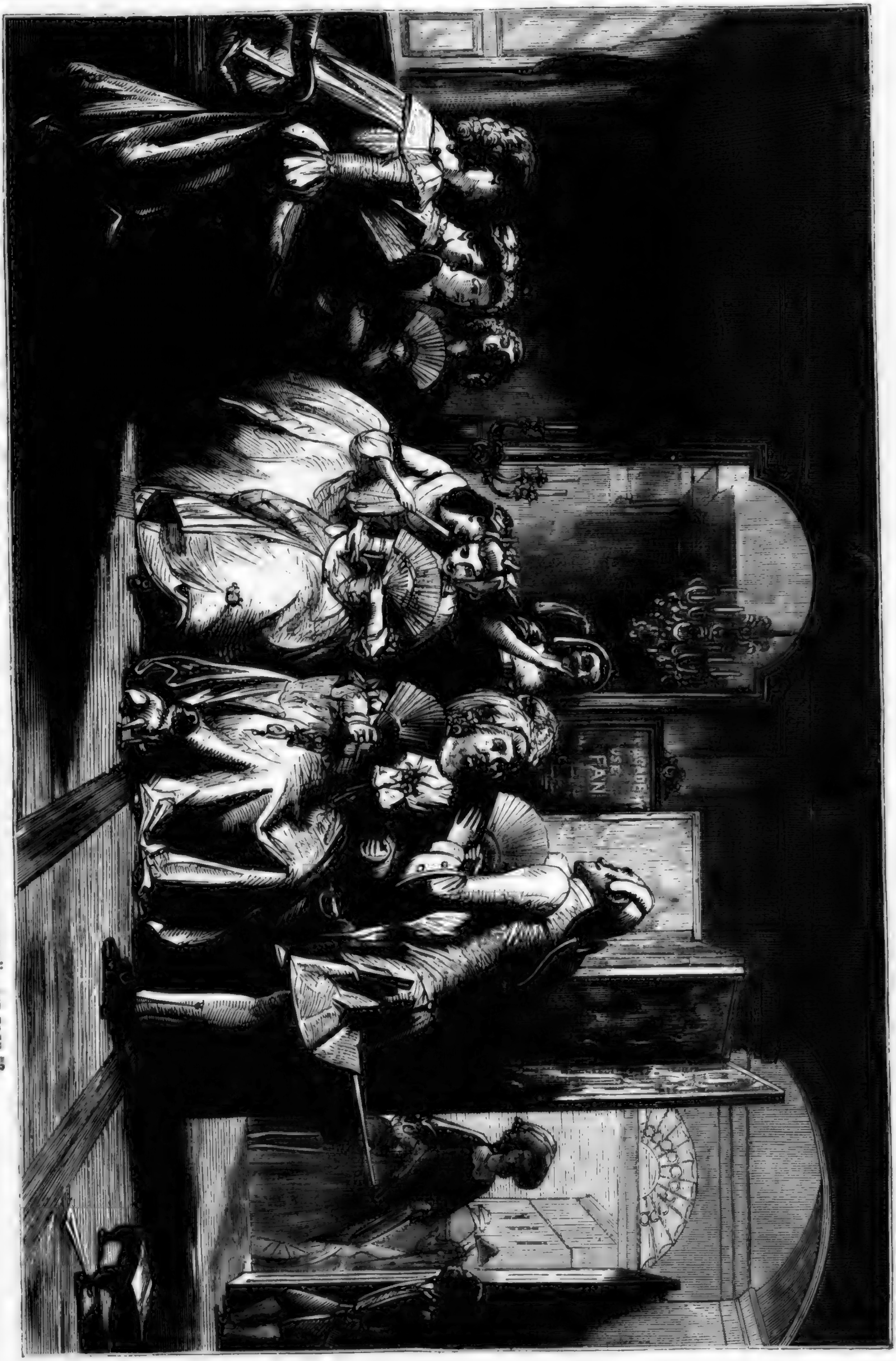
"There, that's right; now I can talk to you. Don't



PADUA LADIES IN THE 16TH CENTURY WITH FLAG-SHAPED FANS.



LADY OF THE TIME OF JAMES I. WITH FEATHER FAN.



THE FANS OF THE PAST AND PRESENT.—"AN ACADEMY WHERE THE USE OF THE FAN IS TAUGHT."—SEE PAGE 22.

you see, Mr. Wadsworth, you and I have been brought up so differently, we could never be happy together."

"I could be happy with you."

"You think so," says Alixe, gently, "but you don't understand how little I know of all the things making up your life. Should I try to learn them, I would have to begin life all over again; and not having been brought up to it, should not probably be strong enough for country life. What would you do with a miserable, sickly wife, who was of no use to you or any one else?"

"I don't want you to larn my ways," says Norman. "I'll larn yours."

"How can you? Suppose you were to be a lawyer, for instance, like my cousin Edmund, it would take years and years of study. Oh, Mr. Wadsworth, we're too old to learn each other's ways."

"*I'm* not," thus Norman, decidedly. "Would all that take me more than fourteen years?"

"Why, no! not so long as that, I think; but——"

Norman leans forward, and once more takes her trembling hand, holding it gently, like a thing too precious to be exposed to garish daylight.

"Didn't you ever read the Bible, Alixe?" adds he, the tender look in his great blue eyes widening and deepening as he speaks. "Don't you remember how Jacob served for Rachel fourteen years, and they seemed to him as but a few days for the love he had to her? I will serve for you fourteen years, my darling, or four times that, if only you'll give me some hope. I know I'm rough, very different from the friends you have at home; but I can learn, and I will, Alixe, if you'll say I may love you in the end."

"Oh, I can't!" she cries out, desperately. "It wouldn't be honest; I don't love you, and I never shall!"

She runs to me, and, throwing herself on her knees, buries her face in my lap.

Norman stands for a moment as though paralyzed; then, throwing one arm across his face, turns away, and, through the gurgle of the rapids, we hear one great groan burst from the poor boy's overcharged heart.

Then he disappears behind the rock, and all is silent. Thus we wait a few minutes, the pitiless orioles shrieking forth their merriment over our heads, the merciless sun shining gayly as ever; then Norman returns to us, his youthful beauty faded and gray, the lines about his mouth set and hard as granite.

"Let's be moving, Mrs. Warrington—Wolf wants to break camp at two o'clock, and it's past twelve now."

So Alixe gathers herself together, and we rise and follow him in sorrowful procession.

Through other and grander caves, down steeper and more slippery rocks, sometimes ankle-deep in water, sometimes to our knees in moss and ferns—thus our path.

Silently Norman helps us down all dangerous and difficult places—almost as silently we accept his aid. By-and-by we are forced to leave the river-bed and take to the ledges, which here break the face of the cliffs.

Once we pause to look down and back. Below us is a huge amphitheatre of rock, its bottom a deep basin of beryl-green water, from which the walls rise black and precipitous. At one side a tall white fall plunges into the emerald pool; on the other another fall leads away the water toward the level country, now far, far below us.

Norman seizes the branch of a young birch-tree, and leans far out over the dizzy abyss.

"There's a big pile of rocks below, and another fall," says he, turning his hollow eyes to me. "Would you like to see? I'll hold you."

"Yes, I should," I say, eagerly. Not that I care, for all my interest in this lonely region is gone; but anything is better than this solemn silence.

He rises, and planting his feet firmly on the slanting rock on which we stand, each grasping tough overhanging boughs for support, takes my wrist in his strong right hand. I lean over and look at the scene of desolation below, at the fierce, jagged rocks, at the black fall rushing deep and tumultuous betwixt them.

I shudder and draw back, Norman silently helping me to a place of safety. Then he as silently holds out his hand to Alixe, and she, giving him her arm, leans out over the black depths below.

I cling closely to the face of our slant resting-place, and watch poor Norman's woe-begone face, as he carefully supports his sweetheart—his, alas! no more.

Alixe seems fascinated with the terrible beauty of the scene below, and stretches further and further out over the brink, nothing but Norman's hand holding her back from eternity. And as she leans away from him the poor fellow's big, hungry eyes linger over her pretty head, crowned with its soft wavy hair; over her whole graceful shape, bent low at his knee, and finally fastens on the plump little hand in his grasp.

He seems to forget where they are, to forget me and all else, to remember only that he is holding *her* hand, that he shall perhaps touch it no more, see her never again through all the weary, tasteless years to come. He gazes longingly, tracing every line of the delicate fingers lying in his hand; then a look of desperate resolution comes into his eyes. He will—yes, he will grant himself this crumb of comfort! And he raises them to his lips.

She is taken by surprise, and flashes round on him with sudden anger.

"Shame on you!" she cries. "You have no right to do that! I'm sorry I came with you!"

Norman starts and shrinks back, stung to the quick—then his wrath, too, blazes forth.

"Stop!" he thunders—"how dare you? Good God! how patient I have been!" and he clutched her arm with a hand of iron.

"Let me go!" she cries, struggling.

And then—how it happened no one can tell—but there is a sudden flutter of golden-brown hair, a sickening plunge into the gulf below; and Norman and I stand alone on that treacherous ledge, looking into each other's ghastly faces and horror-stricken eyes.

Then I shriek aloud, "Alixe! Alixe!" but my voice is drowned in Norman's cry of agony.

"My God! I have lost her!" he cries, and throws up both arms in despair.

The loosened birch-bough springs back into place, a white face flashes downward, and vanishes over the brink; and I stand cowering over the dread abyss, shrieking to those who will never answer—

"Till the sun grows cold,
And the stars are old,
And the leaves of the Judgment Book unfold."

MACREADY was once victimized in "Virginius." The *Numitorius* could not remember his own name. "You will remember it, sir," said the tragedian, carefully pronouncing it for him, "by the association of ideas. Think of numbers—the Book of Numbers." The *Numitorius* did think of it all day, and at night produced, through "the association of ideas," the following effect: *Numitorius*—"Where is Virginia? Wherefore do you hold that maiden's hand?" *Claudius*—"Who asks the question?" *Numitorius*—"I, her uncle—Deuteronomy!"

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THE FANS OF THE PAST AND PRESENT.

By Dora de Blaquiere.

"Three thousand years of fans."

More than three thousand years ago, or about the time that King David reigned over Israel, the artists of ancient Egypt depicted the fan upon the walls of the tombs at Thebes, and the Pharaoh of the day sits on his chair of state surrounded by his fan-bearers, each in his stated rank. The office must have been both honorable and onerous; for in time of war the fan-bearers, with their fans as standards, acted as generals and marshals; while in peace they ever waited on the King in the temple worship, waving their fans to cool the heated air and to protect the sacred offerings from the profanation of flies and other insects.

These insignia of their office were vividly colored fans, on long, slender, twisted and variegated handles. Their modern successors are to be seen in the Pope's official fan-bearers. There are two of these chamberlains, as they are called, and the fans they carry, but do not use, are made of peacock's feathers, with long ivory handles.

The modern Greek Church and its branches place a fan in the hands of the deacon, to be used in the same way, and for the same purpose, as practiced by the early Egyptians, viz., to guard the sacred elements from desecration.

The use of the fan in the worship of ancient Greece was similar, but its forms were far more beautiful.

According to Virgil, they were sacred to Bacchus, and were carried in procession at the feast of that deity. They are called *flabellum* or *muscarium;* and in the Roman Church of to-day the same kind of fans are called, in Italian, *frambella.*

In our chat about the ceremonial use of the fan, we must not forget the Scripture reference to it, for the purpose of winnowing the grain—a very primitive method of separating the chaff, but one which it took some thousands of years to supersede, for the present "fanning" machines were not invented till 1737.

Amongst Roman ladies, too, the services of an attendant slave to carry and use the fan were needful; and the ornamentation bestowed upon these very essential appliances was rich and costly—dyed ostrich plumes and peacock feathers being used for their adornment, while the handles were of gold, set with precious stones, or else of ivory, beautifully carved.

Approaching more closely to modern days, we find the folding fan, said to have been first invented by the Japanese, from whom the Chinese copied it. The Portuguese brought it over from China at some time in the fifteenth century, and from Portugal the new fashion soon spread over Europe, being brought to France by Catherine de Medicis. It became so important a part of a lady's wardrobe, that in the list of Queen Elizabeth's we find no less than twenty-seven fans enumerated. In France, they were formed of perfumed leather and paper, and soon attracted the attention of artists, who painted fans which, at the present day, are reckoned amongst the most valuable treasures of the art-collection.

The French name, *éventail,* is derived from the original shape of the fan, which was like a peacock's tail when spread out.

In the portraits of Queen Elizabeth the feather-fan appears frequently, suspended from the girdle by a gold or silver chain. This shape is now made by the Indians, and sold to the tourists who visit Niagara Falls.

In the portrait of the Princess of Wales, in "Marie Stuart" costume, as worn at the fancy dress ball given at Marlborough House a few years ago, a Canadian fan is seen hanging to her side, so true a copy of those of the seventeenth century that it was found suitable to her exquisite costume. Of this form we give three illustrations.

In another picture we see a very early fan, probably of Moorish origin; it is in shape like the weather-vane of a house, or a small flag. This form of fan is now used in Italy, but principally for fanning the small charcoal fires with which the cooking is done. I have two very gaudily decorated examples of this kind, which were bought in Tunis within the last few years. The fan-leaf is usually made so as to turn round on the stick.

The folding fan seems to have made its appearance in the early part of the seventeenth century, and may be considered the originals of the modern type. Japan probably gave the first idea of this form. It seems, from the account in "Coryat's Travels," in the year 1608, that there were then plenty of cheap fans in Italy, made of paper with wooden handles; the paper part "adorned with excellent pictures, having witty Italian verses or fine emblems written under them, or some notable Italian city painted, with a brief description added thereto."

Returning to England, we find in the poets, dramatists and moralists of the seventeenth century descriptions of a very uncomfortable kind of fan, with a long handle—so long that ladies used their fans for walking-sticks, and chastised their rebellious and naughty children by beating them with their fan-sticks. In Shakespeare's "Henry IV.," ii. 3, we see:

> "I could brain him with his lady's fan."

And in Beaumont and Fletcher:

> "Wer't not better
> Your head were broken with the handle of a fan?"

Aubrey's account of these fans is worth quoting entire, as it is a most vivid and interesting picture of the manners of the day. "The gentlewomen," he says, "had prodigious fans, like that instrument which is used to drive feathers, and they had handles at least half a yard long; with these their daughters were often corrected (alas, poor daughters!). Sir Edward Coke, Lord Chief Justice, rode the circuit with such a fan; Sir William Dugdale told me he was an eye-witness of it. The Earl of Manchester also used such a fan."

Of the decorations of these immense examples of the article, we have a most curious account. They were sometimes prints, referring to the passing events of the day—such as "Bartholomew Fair," or the fashionable "Beggar's Opera"; the works of Hogarth were also used; and we find in Fairholt a description of a fan measuring twenty-eight inches across, dated 1781, "which contains in the centre a well-executed engraving of a musical party, and on each side the words and music of a canon, and three French and Venetian canzonets."

A very large green fan was also in use at the end of the last century as a parasol, to shade the face from the sun. This fashion was very probably adopted from Venice, and it is still in vogue there. I have a large fan in my own possession intended for this purpose, which can also be used as a small one when needed.

Fans suitable to the occasions on which they were to be used, were also in fashion. Thus, we hear of "chapel fans," to be used in chapel, with hymns and texts upon them; "theatre fans," with plans of the boxes and the names of the box-holders; and "fortune-telling fans," with a scheme of divination on them. Of this kind I have a curious example, purchased last year in Belgium, very cheap and common, costing only a few centimes, but containing the whole method of fortune-telling by the lines of

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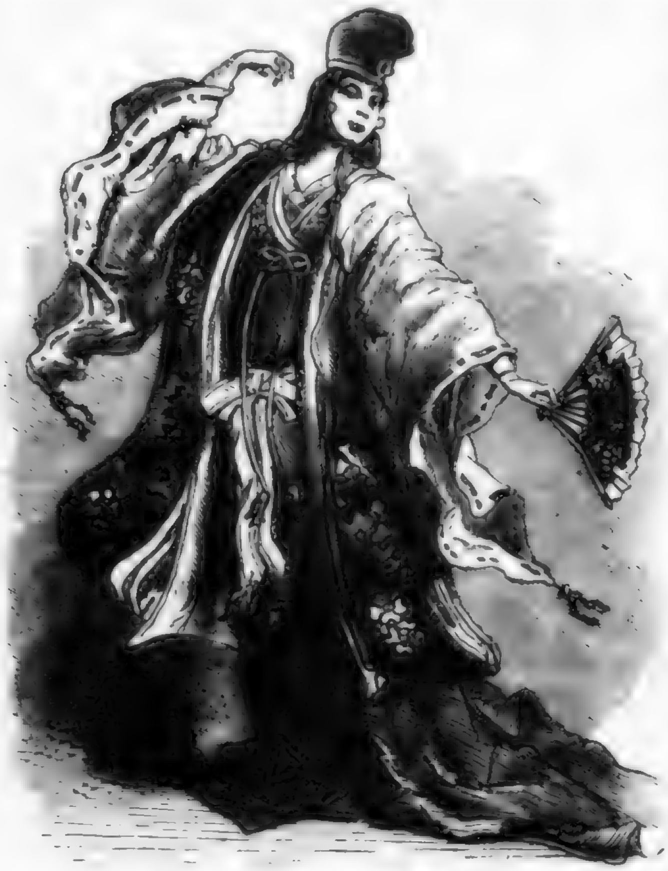
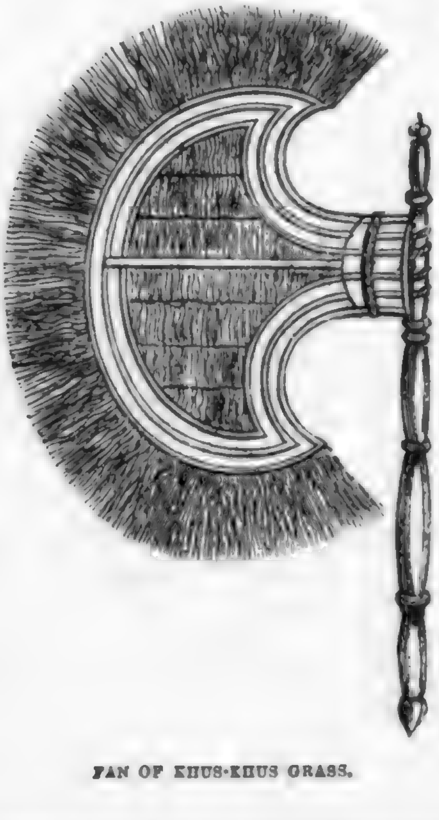


JAPANESE FOLDING FAN.

the hand, the hand itself being given, and the names and meaning of the lines.

In the "Spectator" is an amusing description by Addison of an academy where the use of the fan is taught. "In the flutter of the fan," he says, "there is the angry flutter, the modest flutter, the timorous flutter, the confused flutter, the merry flutter, and the loving flutter. I have seen a fan so very angry that it would have been dangerous for the absent lover who provoked it to have come within the wind of it." This is illustrated, on page 21.

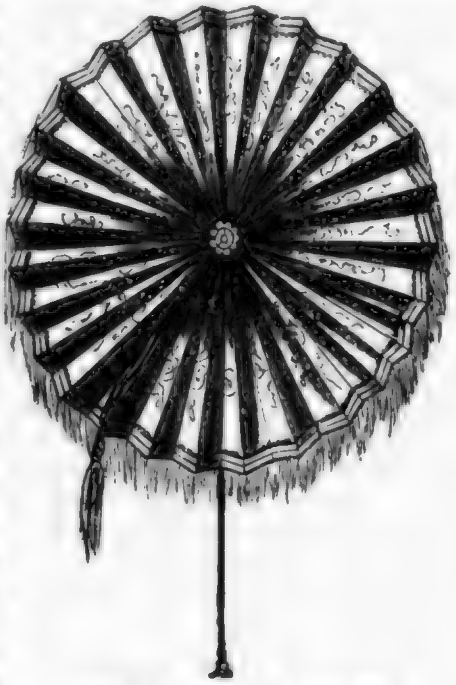
I trust I have interested my readers with the past history of this ancient and important addition to the toilet. It is always pleasant to understand something of the history of what we do; and I hope I have cast a new light, and perhaps a novel one, on a very common article in use, before proceeding to the practical description of how we may ornament and make them for ourselves without much difficulty.



FAN OF KHUS-KHUS GRASS.

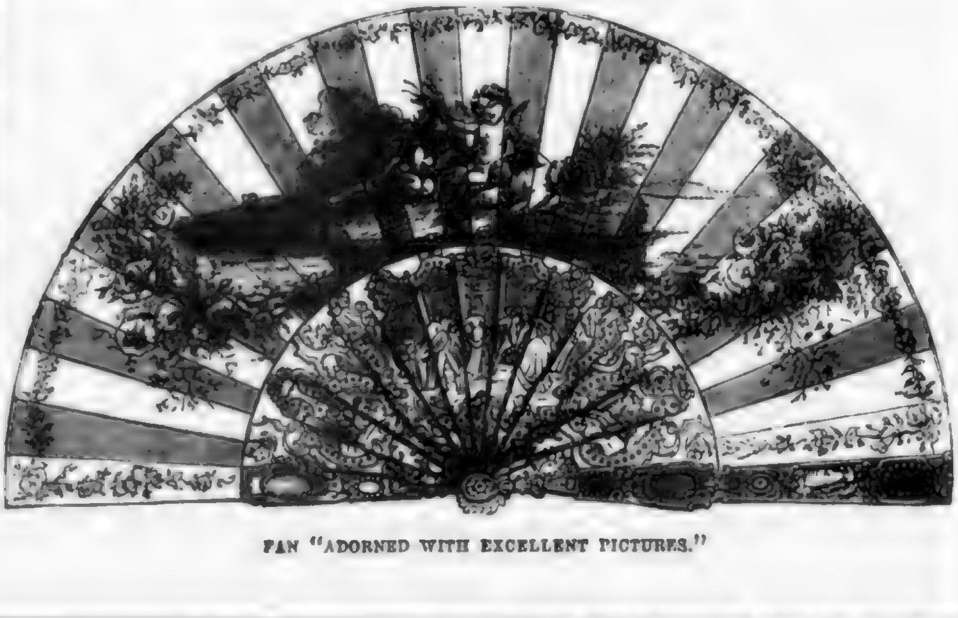
The fan-makers *par excellence* of to-day are the Japanese and the French. A few years ago the Chinese would more justly have been mentioned in place of the former, and they are still unrivaled in the production of mother-of-pearl, carved ivory, wood and bone framework, and their lacquered fans, too, are most exquisitely done; but in the production of a cheap one, the Japanese nation may safely challenge the whole world, so absolutely perfect is their manufacture; for the nicety of finish in the wooden parts, and the really charming decoration of the paper mounts, has not yet been equaled in Europe. These fans are imported and used by tens of thousands; and, as in Italy, Spain, the West Indies and Canada, gentlemen make use of them as well as ladies.

Nor must I forget to mention the palm-leaf fan. They are called in the West Indian Islands palmetto fans, and they are usually seen in two sizes—a small and a large. They are sometimes bound with bright-colored ribbon round the edge, and the handle is covered with the same, while a large rosette decorates the centre. These are the most delightful of fans for comfort and use in the world; they are so light, and do not tire the hand, can be used as a screen, and in fanning a sick person I have always found they produced the most air with the least expenditure of strength.

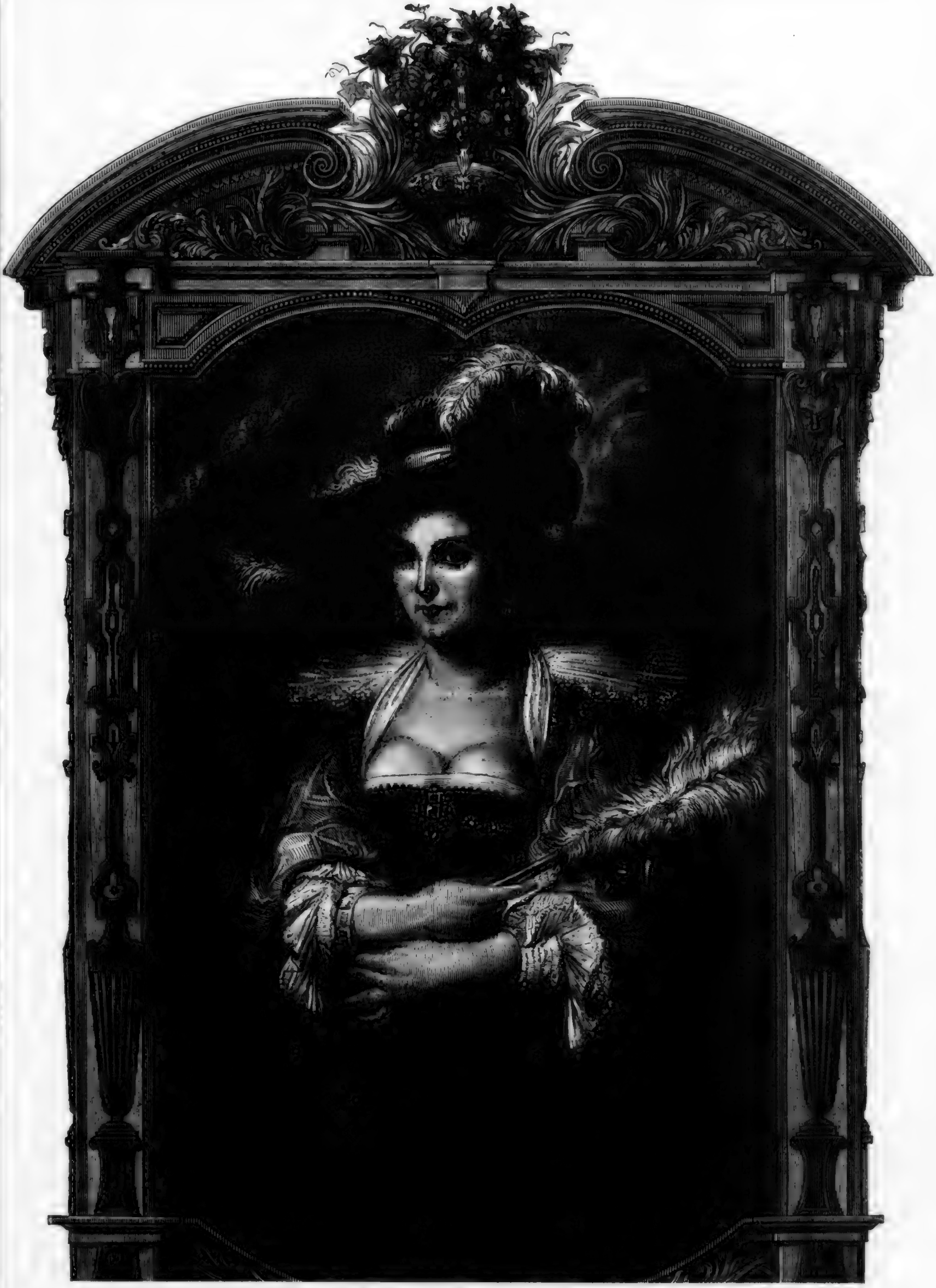


LARGE FAN, USED AS A PARASOL.

The fan of *khus-khus* grass is of East Indian make. This grass is fragrant when wetted, and *punkahs* are often made of it. The fan illustrated turns round on its handle, and the wind is produced by the turning, instead of by waving it to and fro.



FAN "ADORNED WITH EXCELLENT PICTURES."



RUBENS'S WIFE WITH FEATHER FAN OF THE PERIOD.

The large *punkah*, or fan, suspended from the roof of an Indian bungalow, admits of a great deal of ornamentation, and specimens may be seen in museums. These fans are kept in motion by servants especially appointed to the office.

The manufacture of the fan in France presents a remarkable instance of the sub-division of labor, as twenty different operations, performed by twenty different people, are necessary to the production of one fan, which sells for ten centimes. These various processes are not carried on in one manufactory, but form four distinct branches of trade.

The frames, or, as they are called, the *pieds* of the fans, are all made in the Department of the Oise—men, women and children being engaged in the trade. The woods used are the plum, the beam-tree, ebony, sandal and the lime-tree. The cleverness of the peasant work-people is wonderful, considering their absolute want of knowledge of even the first principles of engraving, gilding or sculpture. The piercing of the holes is performed by minute saws, which the workmen manufacture for themselves out of pieces of steel watch-springs. At the Exhibition of 1851, a mother-of-pearl fan was shown in the French section, which contained no less than 1,600 holes in the square inch, the work of a peasant hand.

Fan-painting amongst amateurs is very common at present in England; the beauty of the fan, however, much depending on the suitability of the design and the delicacy of the work. Figures are more used than flowers, or a landscape with figures; and the old style of a group, as painted in the days of Watteau, is no longer seen. On the black satin and silk grounds which have lately been so fashionable, Chinese white is used, and no color, excepting the needful admixture of black to produce gray for the shading.

Fan-painting requires much practice; the painter must not only be a skillful designer, but must have much experience in his or her art, and even then lessons in this special branch are requisite to enable the artist to attain to any perfection.

The most fashionable style of fan at present is the embroidered, a species of decoration which can be achieved by any one with an ordinary knowledge of embroidery stitches; only two being generally used—long and short stitch for figures, and outline stitch for outlines and coarser work. The silk or satin employed must be carefully stretched in a frame before being traced, and the work must be performed with the finest silks that can be obtained, and needles to match. The making-up of the fan is of course done by a proper fan-maker; and if it be properly done, and the embroidery be good, nothing is more effective. Nor should I forget those of lace, which are so fashionable for full dress. They may be made by a skillful lacemaker; but I must not be understood to recommend any of the coarse and badly-worked point-lace which I so frequently see.

Many ladies have beautiful old carved fan-mounts or frames lying by, which they have long put aside, and kept more as relics than as likely to be useful again. Now that both fan-painting and embroidery have become fashionable, the torn or otherwise spoiled leaves can be replaced by fresh ones of home manufacture, much more interesting as well as useful.

The three exhibitions of fans which have taken place recently—in Liverpool, in Edinburgh, and in London—have demonstrated the existence of a revived interest in this article, which is probably owing, in some degree, to the idea that fan-painting and decoration is a suitable work for ladies. When we remember that the genius of Watteau and Boucher, in France, was applied to their decoration, and that in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, in England, the handles alone were marvels of goldsmith's work, costing frequently from £40 to £50, we cannot fail to be struck with our neglect of so worthy an instrument for the display of artistic taste and skill. In the cabinets of collectors of fine art works fans have ever found a welcome, and many exquisite specimens have been preserved to us; but it was not until the year 1870 that any exhibition of them was organized. In that year the authorities of the South Kensington Museum took the initiative by inviting loans of interesting and artistic fans. In answer to this they received no less than 500, the number of lenders amounting to 137. The next exhibition was held by the Liverpool Fine Art Club in that city last year, when a magnificent collection was gathered from all parts—in all 176 specimens.

The recent exhibition held in Edinburgh brought together 250 fans, which were divided into ancient and modern, and arranged according to their nationalities.

With the prevalent taste for all antique articles of dress, it will be easy, in this country, to give a very curious and instructive Fan Exhibition.

DADS.

"GO IT, Dads!"

"Here's the Prince of Tag-rag and Bobtail!"

"Oh, don't you shoot that hat!"

"The hat my father wore!"

These and other choice specimens of boyish wit echoed about a forlorn and ragged man as he made his way through the principal street of the village of Eshton. It was a day about the first of March. For twenty-four hours previous, snow and rain had fallen, but this morning the sun had risen, lighting up the crystal enamel of every branch and twig into diamond splendor. How inexpressibly beautiful it was! Every tree standing out in delicate relief against a sky of tenderest blue—everything sheathed in fairy glass, every bud in its wonderful diamond case. But the green of the live cedar-hedges, shining through the ice-jewels, was the most lovely of all.

The boys saw nothing of this. There was plenty of slush under their feet, and of that they made snow-balls and pelted the man whose only fault was that he looked deserted and ragged and miserable.

How he came by the name they called him ("Dads") would have puzzled an observer. It was not a term of endearment, evidently; neither could it have been given for a patriarchal age, for this man was not more than forty, though gray and haggard and worn enough for any age. He had not been long in the town, either, to have gained that rude paternal appellation from its children; but some boyish wag, in a moment of inspiration, had dubbed him with that name at first glance, and he had borne it ever since.

He bore his honors meekly, poor fellow! as he took the slush-balls of the boys. He only took off the poor old hat and, with a trembling hand, wiped the wet snow from his face. He had a thin face and pale-blue eyes, with a shrinking expression in them, like an animal who is used to blows.

The boys stopped as they caught the watery gleam of

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those pale-blue eyes; anything so meek, so pitiful, yet reproachful, it was not in a boy's nature to imagine.

"Let the old duffer go," muttered one.

It was schooltime, too, so that helped their resolution. They trotted off merrily, the man looking after them with his sad eyes. Could it be he had ever bounded along like that? ever felt any such pulses in those sluggish veins—such joyous life in every limb?

He clasped his thin hands together and looked up at the sky. That looked tender and bright and pitiful. My God! How well he remembered the past—the happy childhood, the youth, wrecked at the first quicksand of temptation! Ah, how soon he had squandered the strength and joy and hope he had fancied inexhaustible! Like a spendthrift, he had wasted his fortune, and must be a beggar for ever.

He had had a name once that many cared to hear; that one dark-eyed, sweet-faced girl had murmured with love. Now he was "Dads" in the eyes of the world; an old beggar, that was all.

Yet he did not beg, miserable as he looked, hungry as he often was. The wild dissipation of the past was over now, the riotous living was at an end, and he fed upon husks, yet he had never begged. Unfitted as he was for any important, well-paid work, with health and energy gone, he had yet found odd jobs which gained him a bit of bread.

He was hungry this morning—ravenously hungry. He looked closely about to see if any careless servant had thrown out so much as a cold potato. He would have eaten it with relish, sodden and soaked as it must have been in those overflowing, slush-choked gutters; but he espied nothing. He looked around vaguely for work. Ah, the pavements! Why had he forgotten them?

He stood before a house, grand and handsome for Eshton. There was a garden about it, with all the flower-beds warmly covered from the frost, and tall rosebushes standing up in stiff straw wrappings. He fumbled about at the great iron gate a moment, and opened it at last. There were wide windows with lace curtains and flowers at them, and between the flowers a golden head and a sweet, flower-like face looked out. A little girl of about ten years old had watched the strange man as he made his way to the door. There was something oddly hesitating about his manner which struck the child.

"Why, he looks frightened," she said; and it seemed very odd to her that a great man should be frightened at anything.

She saw him stand staring at the door in a distraught way, and ran out herself to open it. Once she looked into his face; with the quick intuition of a pure spirit she read some sort of intense suffering there. He stared at her intensely, and strangely muttered:

"Ten years! Ten years!"

"Did you want papa?" the little maiden asked.

"Does he want the pavement cleaned?" the man inquired, roused to a knowledge that he must make his errand known.

"Oh, yes; I am sure he does."

"I have no spade, I am so poor," the man said, searching the child's face with a strange hunger, to read again there the heavenly pity that had dawned upon it.

"Oh, we have plenty, poor man!" she said. "Have you had some breakfast?"

"Not a bite."

"Well, you cannot work, then. Come—come into the kitchen; I will give you some."

The child was evidently queen in the splendid house, for though the cook stared in wonder at Miss May's company, she had seen the same sight before, for the little girl had a tender heart.

She stood by when the man's plate had been piled with bread and meat, and a smoking bowl of coffee set before him. She watched him with the same divine sympathy as he ate and drank, as if it all warmed and invigorated her. The man looked less like a starved animal when he ceased.

"I am coming out to watch you," she said, as, armed with the spade, he went out into the garden.

The next moment she appeared in the prettiest little red riding-hood imaginable. Her golden curls blew about it till her fresh little face looked as if it were set in a frame of scarlet and gold. Anything daintier had never risen on the forlorn man's vision. He looked at her with the adoration of a devotee before a saint, yet with a strange exultation in his eyes.

The snow was unsullied in the yard, white, pure and beautiful. Every gate-post was capped with it, and it clung there in rarest sculpture. May danced about here and there through it like a sprite for a while, then came and stood soberly before the worker.

"What is your name?" she said.

A spasm of pain crossed his face. He could not speak his old name, with all its memories of joy and pain, so he said, with a wan smile:

"They call me 'Dads.'"

"Oh, what a funny name! Do your children call you that?"

"My children!" with just a little choking in the throat; "I have no children."

"Then who gave you that name?"

"Oh, the boys. They chaff me, you know, but I don't mind. It does as well as any other name for me."

"Do you live all alone?"

"Yes; all alone, in a sort of cellar."

"Oh, how miserable! I shall talk to papa about it. He will give you work, and then you can have a better room."

A gleam of sunshine seemed to fall on the man's wan face—a pale reflection of the light in the child's. She was kindling hope again in that despairing heart.

"I am not fit for much," he said, falteringly, "but I am honest; at my worst, I never took a cent—remember that, my dear—always remember that." May wondered a little why she should always remember that, but the man went on: "I would serve him faithful. I can cut and saw wood, or put in coal, or do any odd job. I don't drink."

May stored up these things to tell her father, and watched her new *protégé* with a strange interest, as if he were an odd big child whom she had adopted, and from that day there was a bond between them.

Dads found constantly odds and ends of work to do, and was often at Judge Wentworth's, watching pretty little May with a strange tenderness as she flitted about him at his work, and he noted how the rosebud was opening into the rose.

One bright April day, about four years after the time of the snow-cleaning, Dads had been weeding the garden. It was the hour of noonday rest, and he had some bread-and-cheese, which he was eating in the little summer-house. May, always friendly from the first day of their acquaintance, had brought him out a large piece of pie. When he had finished, she said:

"Dads, you have forgotten entirely a promise you made me once."

"That is a shame!" exclaimed Dads, "for you don't forget yours."

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May was a beautiful girl of fourteen now, with the loveliest blush-rose on her cheek. She had many new interests. Life was opening like a flower before her, but she had never forgotten the desolate man, to whom the world seemed such a cold and dreary place.

Dads had improved since we first met him. His clothes were whole and clean. There was even the look of a broken-down gentleman about him. Worn and wan, indeed, was his face still, with a pathetic hunger in its expression, as though he had missed something in life—the something that sweetens it all for us.

"Your story, you know," May said, cheerily. "Come, it's too warm for me to do anything now. Tell me your story."

Dads looked as if smitten with a blow.

"Did I," he said, "promise that?"

"Yes, you promised, and you know, Dads, it is not curiosity only that makes me want to hear it. It will only make me feel more interest and sympathy, and I am sure you will feel happier to have some one who knows about you. People say it's a great consolation to have some one to confide in;" and the young girl looked as dignified and elderly as possible.

"Perhaps it is a consolation," Dads murmured, reflectively. "Well, Miss May, I will tell you what I can. You mustn't expect anything like the stories you read. It's very simple, and—and miserable," he added.

"Then I shall feel all the more sorry for you," May said, with a very tender heart, as she sat down to listen.

"I was what they call a wild boy, my dear," Dads began, in a deprecating way. "Perhaps it was well that my mother went to her rest before trouble began. Perhaps if she had lived, I would have been different—who can tell? My father was very stern. He had no patience, and at last told me to go—to go to the devil my own way. I beg pardon, my dear. I did not mind at the time. I was glad to be free. I think I was never very wicked, but, God knows, I drank very hard—that I must confess—and that is the beginning of many kinds of sin."

THE MAIDEN'S REVERIE.—SEE POEM ON PAGE 18.

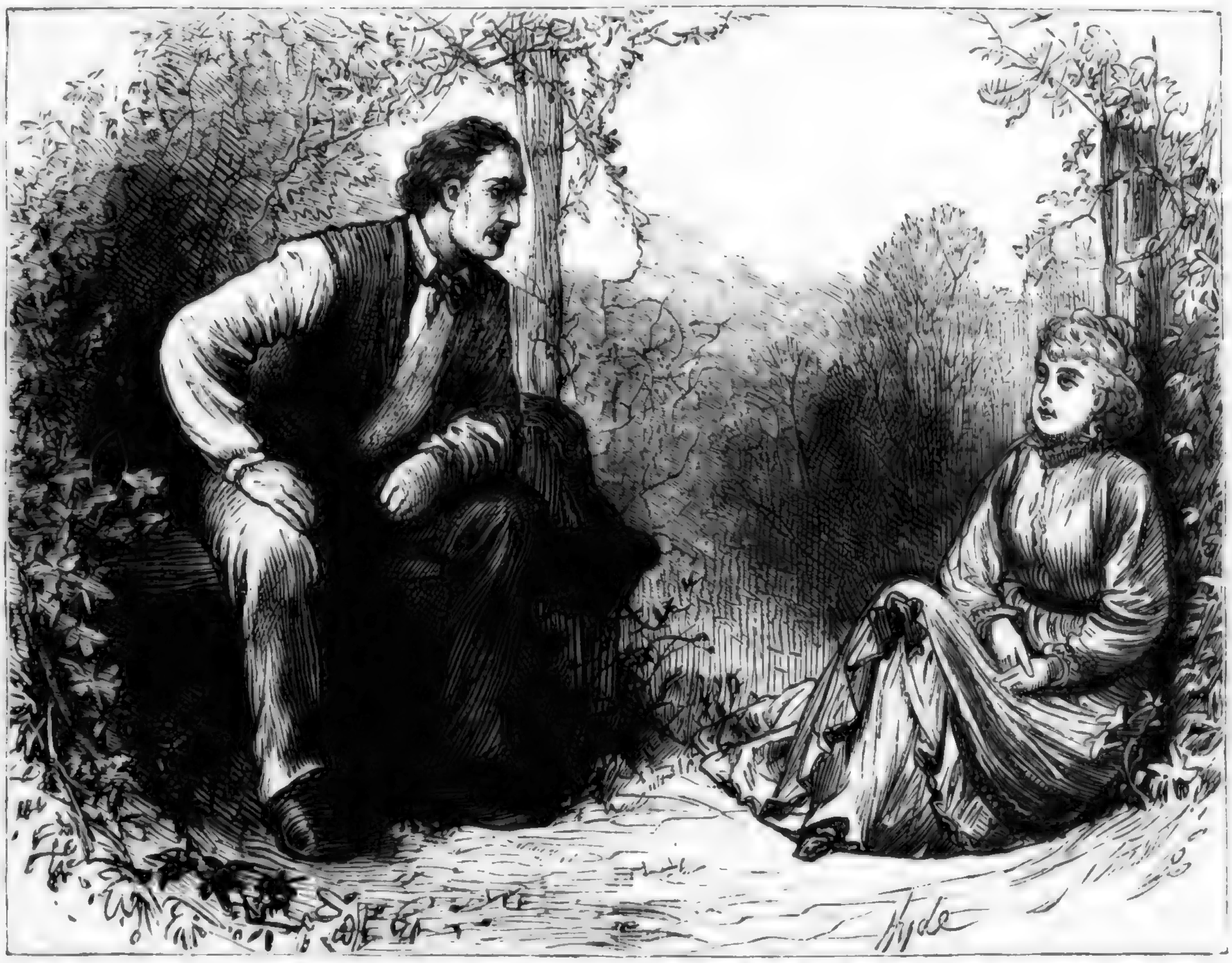
"My mamma is dead, too," said May, thoughtfully. "I have had a governess always, since I was a tiny little thing; but papa is so noble and splendid, I just adore him!"

This last in a rapturous and exaggerated style, peculiar to schoolgirls.

"I am very glad," he said, and seemed to fall into a reverie and forget his story.

"Well, go on," May said, after awhile, and Dads came to with a stare, and continued:

"Once, one night, when I had been drinking pretty



DADS.—"'YOUR STORY, YOU KNOW,' SAID MAY, CHEERILY. 'COME, IT'S TOO WARM FOR ME TO DO ANYTHING NOW. TELL ME YOUR STORY.'"—SEE PAGE 26.

hard, but not so as to lose my wits entirely, I heard, as I was going home, one of those street-singers, you know. It was late, and, as the sweet young voice struck my ear, I strolled over in its direction, and saw among the crowd of men and boys at the door of a restaurant such a pale, pretty, pitiful-looking child, trying to keep her voice from breaking, while the tears rolled down her cheeks. Even the rough men did not jeer at her. There was something so pure in her voice, that they all stood abashed before her. I seemed to see the sins of my life all arrayed in judgment against me as I listened. She finished, and some one passed around a hat for her. I dropped into it all the money I had.

"'It's Dolly Brown,' said the man who held it, 'and her mother is dying. The landlord has threatened to turn them out if the rent is not made up to-morrow.'

"Every one in that poor crowd did their utmost, and the young girl thanked them in a broken voice, Miss May. I—I loved her from that moment. I got some one to take me to see her when her mother died, and afterward she cared enough for me to marry me. Ah, now you will see what a wretch I am. You will see I do not deserve any kindness from you, or any one. Poor, pretty little Dolly! We went to housekeeping in one room, and you would have thought it was the Garden of Eden to see how happy she was. How she sewed the little white curtains to make it pretty, and had a box of violets in the window!"

Dads stopped, as if the memory was too much for him. That little room, with its white curtains and violets, was the best glimpse of paradise he had ever seen. And his own sin had lost him that little bit of Eden.

May was very patient, though she longed to hear the rest. Child as she was, she had such delicate sympathies with his sorrow, that she did not make even a restless movement. Dads stared at her after a moment, as if he had forgotten her presence.

"Oh," he said at last, with a half-groan, "I must go on. I told you about my drinking, didn't I? Well, for awhile I was steady. I loved the poor child who had given herself to me—God knows I did—but then I could not break a bad habit in a day. No! I will not excuse myself with lies. I did not try. I was a brute—only I thank God I never said a hard word to Dolly—I am glad of that. It is the only bit of comfort I have.

"Of course we got poorer and poorer. She grew paler, and there was a sick look in her face, but I did not see it. I remembered it afterward. Well, one day a baby, a little girl, was born to us. I was very happy about that. A dear little blue-eyed mite of a thing, that looked like me, Dolly said. She smiled with some of her old happiness as she showed me the baby. And I—what did I do to show my joy? I went off to some of my boon companions to celebrate it my own way. We drank a quantity of bad whisky—the cheapest kind—and I went blindly staggering out at night, too drunk to know my way. Somewhere I was knocked down by a wagon, and lay insensible. When I awoke I was in a neat room at a hospital. I understood after the first faint minutes how it was. Slowly came back the truth of how I had left my wife, and I was frantic. I startled the nurse when she came in, by crying:

"'How long have I been here?'

"'Three weeks. You have had an injury of the brain.'

"'Three weeks! Good God! What has become of my wife and baby?'

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"My brain seemed on fire. I had a relapse, and it was weeks again before I could stagger to my feet, and then days before I was dismissed as cured. This was in a great city, you know, where people—poor and insignificant people—can be quite lost.

"What had my poor Dolly done all this dreadful time? I hoped the neighbors had been kind to her. I made what haste I could to the little narrow street. Oh! what a beautiful day it was—bright with sunshine everywhere—but darkness was in my heart, and oh, Miss May, I looked up at the windows, and saw them shut!

"Ah, well! Perhaps the baby was asleep. My heart beat fast at the thought—the baby! It must be nearly two months old. No one met me on the stairs to break the blow. I rushed up the stairs. The room door stood wide open. The room was empty. Everything—everything was gone. Not a sign of life was in it.

"My head was weak yet, and it swam around and throbbed horribly. I tried to think! Perhaps some friend had taken my poor Dolly home? Ah, yes! I found, indeed, that her best friend had taken her home. Standing, with a sickening anguish creeping slowly over me, and staring into the dark, deserted little room, I heard a heavy step. It was Mrs. Rooney, our landlady—a rough but kind-hearted woman.

"'Arrah!' she said, 'ye're a bit too late, my b'y, and bad 'cess to you!'

"She looked very angry, and her eyes flashed fire.

"'My wife!' I managed to gasp.

"'Oh, much ye cared for yer wife, ye onnateral monster!' she cried—'a-leaving her without the bite and the sup, while ye went among a lot o' rantin' and tearin' devils!'

"'Oh, where is she?' I cried.

"'She's dead,' answered Mrs. Rooney, shortly. 'Ye left her to pine and worry, not knowin' where ye were, and thinkin' you were kilt entirely, which was too good luck to be true. She niver held her head up, but was for all the worruld like a broken lily, poor dear! On the third day the fever set in, and she'd call an' call, "Oh, John, dear! Oh, come to me, John!" till me heart was clean broke a-hearin' her.'

"Oh, my dear Miss May, I was weak with the sickness, and I just dropped down senseless on the floor when I heard that. Mrs. Rooney, who had a kind heart, was softened to me when she saw my distress and when I told her my story, but she could not soften the bad news. My poor Dolly was dead—dead and buried. Whether anxiety for me brought on the fever, God knows. My poor girl was gone, and the baby had been taken to some home or other for care.

"After awhile, I took a little comfort in the thought of the baby. I swore a solemn oath that I would never touch a drop of liquor again, and I have kept that pledge. Ah, never could I have taken a glass in my hand without seeing my girl's poor dead face in the poison stuff!

"Mrs. Rooney could not tell me at first where the home was, but I wandered about till I found it. While I waited in the hall, I heard a baby cry. I did not remember how many babies must be there. I thought it was mine, and the little cry just stabbed my heart. There were tears in my eyes when the stately lady came down and asked my business. I told her my story, and she listened, gravely.

"Yes; there had been a child taken from the house I mentioned, but they had it no longer.

"Ah, Miss May, this seemed like a death-blow. I had made all my vows for that baby. I was going to atone to her for the misery I had caused the poor mother, and she was gone!

"'Gone!' I cried. 'Gone where?'

"'Why, it is rather an odd story,' she said, looking quite pleased all the while. 'Nothing could have happened better for the poor little thing. It happened that a lady, stopping with her husband at the hotel opposite, lost her baby suddenly in the night with croup. She was very delicate indeed, and they feared her brain would give way. Her husband consulted with the doctor, who was our doctor as well, and he told him if his wife's mind could be interested in anything, she might be saved. And then the good physician volunteered to tell her the story of this poor little child, and she did waken to an interest in it, and, at last, asked to see it. It was a pretty little thing, and the weeping mother took it right to her heart.'

"'But where is it? They cannot have it—it is my child!' I cried out in agony.

"'You surely would not interfere with the child's prospects?' the matron answered, very gravely. 'You know you could not do as well for it. These people are rich. It will be sheltered from the poverty that killed its mother.'

"Ah, that was a stab. I did not dare cry out that I loved it—that my heart was hungry for it, that there was a dull aching in my breast that gave me no peace. But I asked, as humbly as possible, for the name of the people who had taken my child. I think the matron did not care to give me that. She went to look over some papers, and then came back to say she could not find the card, and the people were only passing through the place, so she could not tell where they lived."

Dads was silent for a long while then, and May, looking at him with very dim eyes, said, at last:

"And did you never find the name?"

"I gave them no rest, my dear, and at last—ah, well, it's one o'clock now, and, you know, I said I would tell you what I could. I can't tell any more now."

"Oh, but—but this is the most exciting part," May said, with a disappointed face.

"Ah, I don't know. There ain't much more. 'Twasn't much use looking now—was it, Miss May? If that little mite of a baby grew old enough to choose, 'tain't likely she'd choose to leave her pretty home and come and live in a little cobwebby room with a bare floor, and me for company."

May seemed to be turning the thought over in her mind, and was perplexed what to say.

"Now, I mustn't be idling here any longer," Dads said, with a deep sigh, looking into May's face.

"Oh, I am so sorry for you!" May said, feeling that she had been lacking in sympathy. "Some time I'm coming to see the room where you live; and don't you want a pot of violets for the window?"

Dads shook his head in a sad way.

"No; I don't want violets," he said; "but thank you, dearie."

When he looked around his forlorn room that night, he shook his head again and smiled—a very pale, wan smile. Did any flower grow that could brighten it for him?

He sat down and thought over all his life. Telling his story that day brought all so vividly before him. He took down a box and opened a bit of yellow paper which he had read many a time. He read it carefully now, as if he had never seen it before. It ran thus:

> "The child you seek was given to Judge Allen Wentworth and his wife. She was called May, because she was born in that month. Let me entreat you, if you really care for her, to leave her in the good hands into which she has fallen. I can give you no clew to the present home of the Wentworths.
>
> "Mary Lane."

There were drops on this bit of paper where he had blistered it with his tears, but now he looked at it with dry eyes. He thought of his weary pilgrimage from place to place to find the Wentworths with some dim idea of taking home his child, but as time went on, his love had grown purer, holier. He would only see his girl, with his own eyes, know if she were happy, but never disturb her happiness. This he had resolved upon before the snowy morning, when he had at last found the true place, after years of fruitless effort.

When he saw the golden-haired sprite, with her dainty ways, her ribbons and embroidery, he could as soon have claimed her for his daughter as he would have claimed an angel from heaven. He only prayed that he might be near her—where he could see her bright face, and read in it her kindly heart. If she had been cold and proud, he could have gone away, perhaps; but she was so full of tenderness, so loving and gentle! It was a balm to his poor bruised heart to be near her. It was bitter-sweet. He felt there was a tender flattery in the name she called him ("Dads"), while the same word from the street-boys appeared an insult.

He folded up the paper again and looked about the room. He had nothing left from the old time but the little box in which he kept the few precious things of his life—all that had been saved from the wreck which swept away wife and child. Mrs. Rooney had kindly kept the box for him. It held a small faded daguerreotype of his Dolly, but the pale face seemed fast fading away into a ghost.

There was a knot of pink ribbon there, and a lace collar with a coral pin—the only finery the poor woman ever possessed. Should he leave them to May when he died? Should he let her know? No! He resolved, in a sublime heroism worthy of a martyr, that he would never let her know. Why should he torment her with regrets when he was gone? Yet sometimes he madly craved a word from her of love—such as children give their parents. She was his own, in spite of all the barriers of time and circumstance—his own, his little girl. Oh, to feel once her arms about his neck! To hear her whisper, "Father!" To receive one childlike kiss! The longing was absolute pain.

It was no small thing that this man conquered such longings and put them down with a strong hand. Frail and worn and poor as was the outward tabernacle of flesh, the inner man had been renewed day by day. He came home every day to his lonely room. He made himself his poor cup of tea and drank it, solitary and alone; often picturing to himself a bright face sitting opposite, a pretty white hand pouring it out for him.

"But I threw away my blessing—I lost my chance in life long ago!" he would murmur, with a quivering lip.

This night all came strangely back to him. He felt restless and uneasy. He thought it was because he had told his story to May, and yet he wondered and looked on as all the events of his life marshaled themselves before him.

He sat dreaming there till late, sometimes dozing, it may be, but starting up with a suffocated feeling. The room was too warm and close to him. Something—one of those mysterious impulses which are inexplicable to us—led him out into the street. It was a clear, bright, starlit night, and he walked on. Suddenly he heard the clang of a bell, and he recollected that just such a sound had echoed through his dreams.

"Fire! fire! fire!"

The streets were full of tumult now. Hurrying feet, cries of "Where? where?" mingled with the alarm.

There was only one way for Dads to walk, that he might make sure of the safety of his darling. Strange, he scarcely noticed that the crowd were surging that way, too. Then a hoarse voice sounded near him:

"Judge Wentworth's house!"

My God! It was, it was!

He saw it now. The familiar garden, with the flowers he had tended that day, looking bright in that baleful light. The long tongues of flame were curling all about the lower story. Then he remembered that the judge was not at home. He had gone to attend some country court. Only May and her governess, with the servants, were there.

He waited for no ladder, but burst in one of the doors and made his way up amid the smoke and fire. It blinded him, but he knew his way. He heard voices, and then a cry of affright, and a little white-robed figure came flying out.

"I am here, Miss May—I am here, my darling!" he cried, frantically, as he caught her in his arms.

With a glad exclamation, she ran to him.

"Miss Evans has fainted away!" she cried. "You must help her!"

"I must help you first," he cried. "That will be the quicker way. I must have you safe first, darling."

And there was no time for remonstrance, if they were to escape down the stairway, which looked like a yawning pit full of fire and smoke.

Dads took the girl in his arms, and all the great tenderness of his poor bruised heart welled up and nearly overcame him. He held his child for the first time. For the first time her arms were around his neck. He felt her head against his breast. Oh, bitter joy! Oh, joyful pain! His feet staggered, and his eyes were blinded by his tears.

But he did not falter or fall. How he made his way he never knew, for he seemed to tread on air. He could see nothing for the black billows of smoke which curled about him. Once something fell crashing on his head and smote him with an awful pain, but May was safe, and he scarcely heeded it in his ecstatic joy. Only when he had reached the garden he put her down suddenly on the greensward, and dropped like a dead man.

There was a great scene of confusion, and May did not see at first the fate of her deliverer. Some intrepid fireman saved the governess, and then a kind neighbor took in the homeless ones. When the beautiful May morning broke, the young girl looking out on its sunshine suddenly remembered Dads.

"I never even thanked him," she said; "and now I must find out something about him."

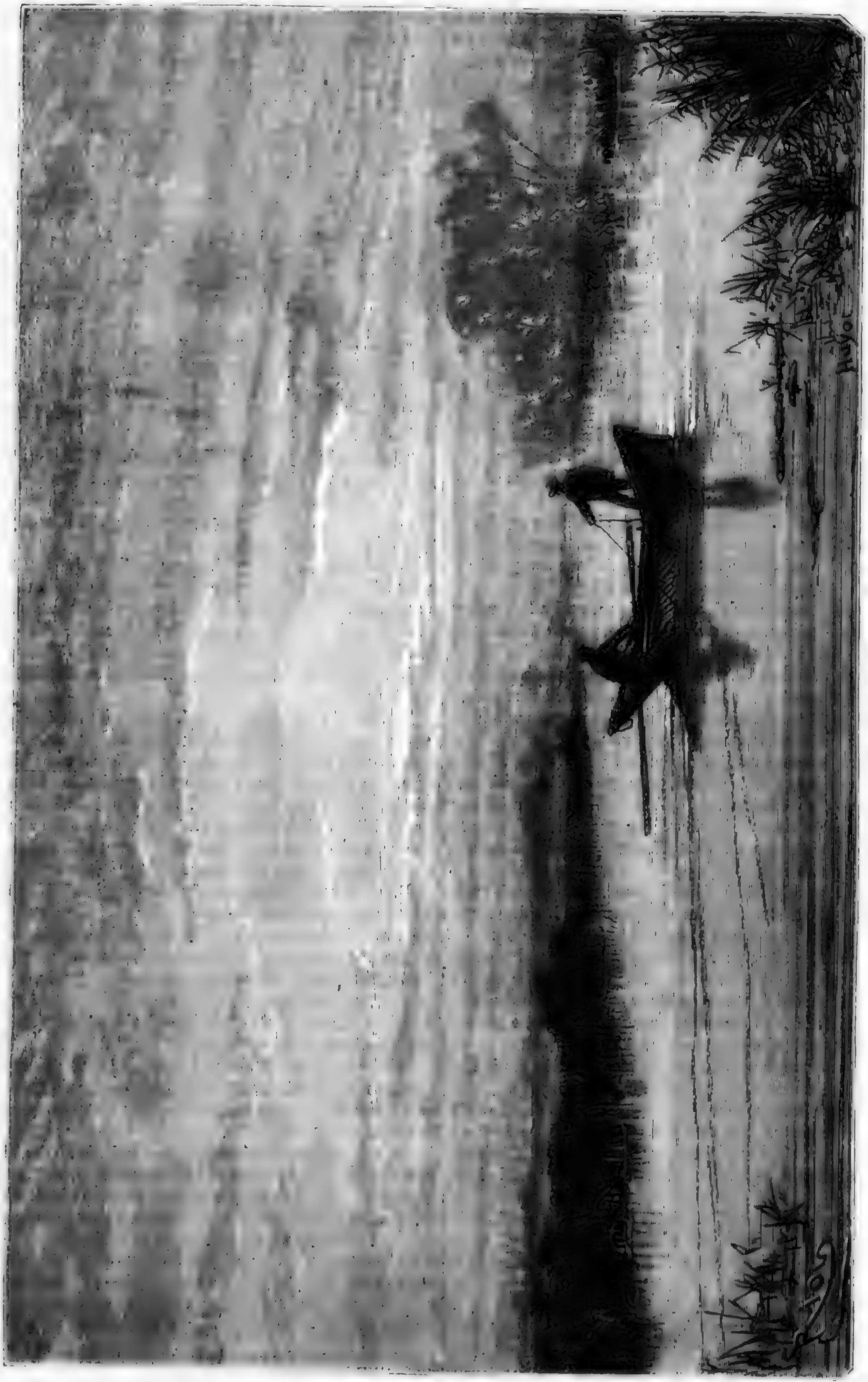
What she did hear alarmed her terribly. There was an old man had fainted, or something, they said, but he had recovered enough to tell where his home was, and had been taken there.

"Oh, I am sure that was my poor Dads!" the girl said, and she gave her governess no rest till she had the carriage brought, that they might go and inquire about him. As they reached the door a gentleman was coming out. It was Dr. Ross, and he knew them and stopped.

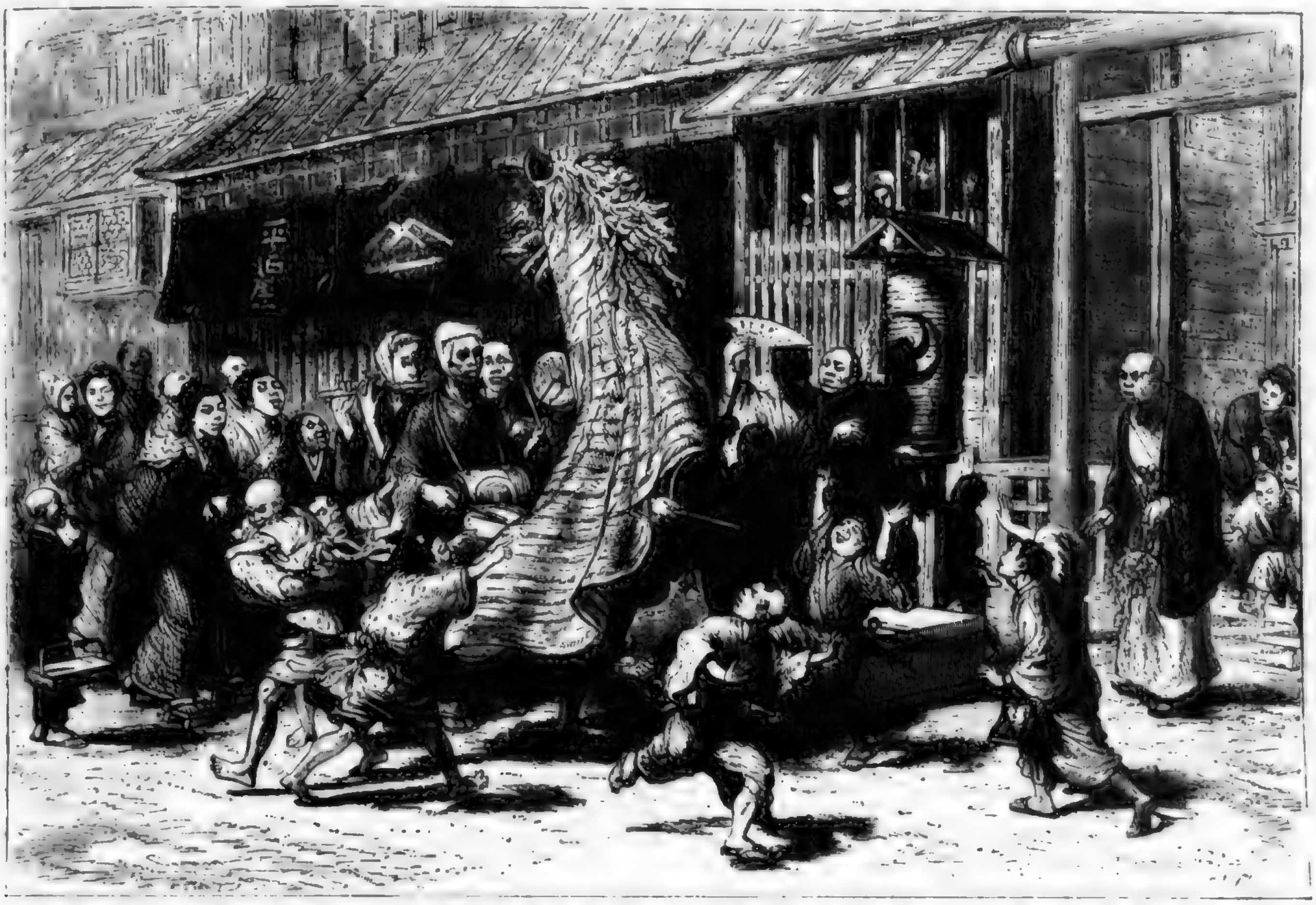
"I've just been with a poor fellow in there who was hurt at the fire last night," he said. "It's very sad; he's fatally injured. He is quite friendless—no one to stay with him but the landlady, and she says she has half-a-dozen of children to look after. He can't live long, poor fellow!"

May's eyes filled with tears.

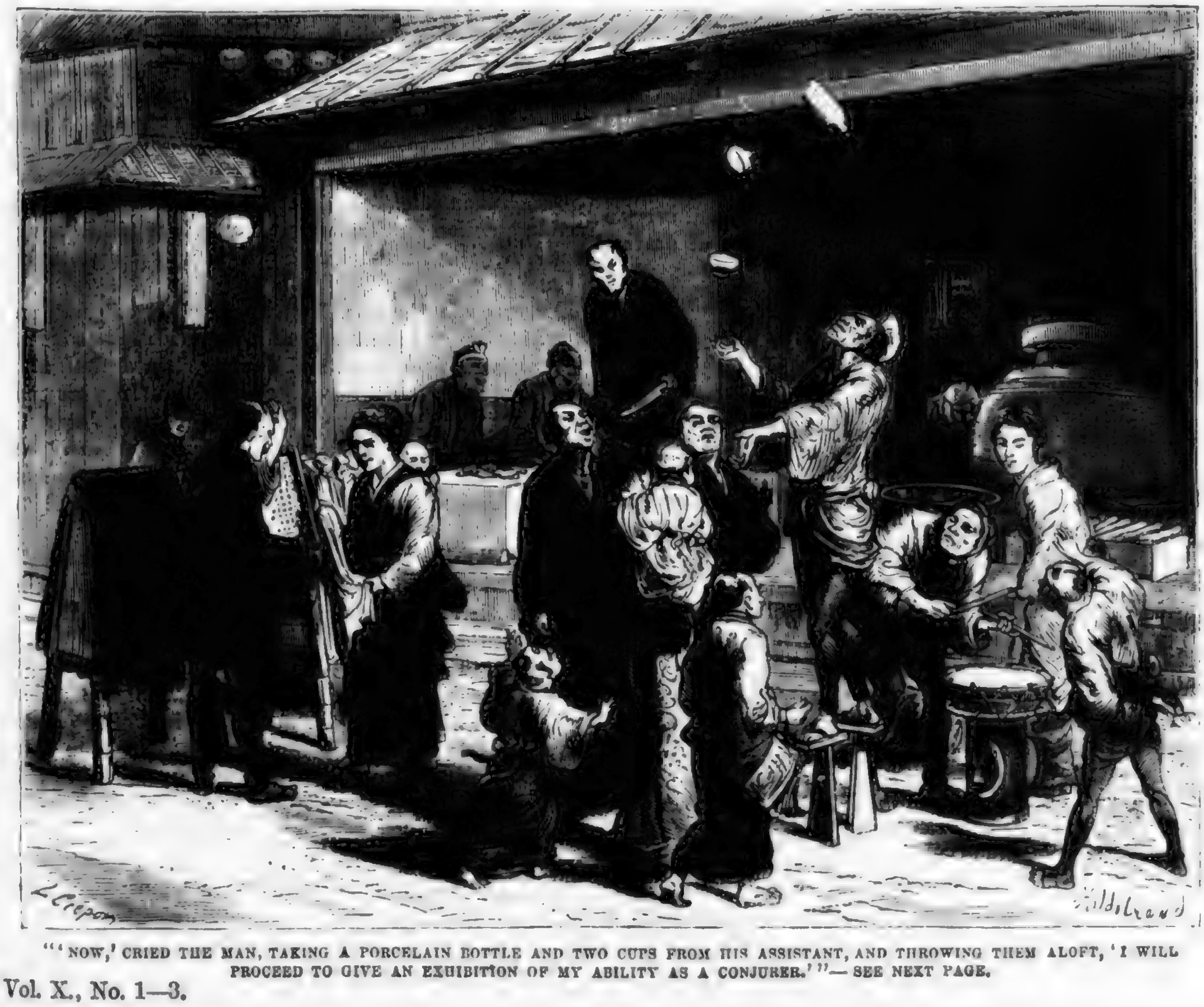
"Oh, we will stay with him," she cried. "He saved me last night, and must have been hurt then."



SEINE-FISHING ON A SMOKY DAY.



HOW THE JAPANESE AMUSE THEMSELVES.—"IN THE MIDST OF THE FUN A SHAVEN-HEADED GENTLEMAN DRESSED IN THE GARB OF A SCHOOLMASTER, CARRYING IN HIS HAND A PAPER DUSTER, SUDDENLY EMERGED FROM A BUILDING ON THE SIDE STREET."



"'NOW,' CRIED THE MAN, TAKING A PORCELAIN BOTTLE AND TWO CUPS FROM HIS ASSISTANT, AND THROWING THEM ALOFT, 'I WILL PROCEED TO GIVE AN EXHIBITION OF MY ABILITY AS A CONJURER.'"—SEE NEXT PAGE.

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So the two went into the darkened room with soft footsteps, and saw poor Dads lying there in a low delirium, clutching at the clothes and muttering strange things. He was as weak as a little child, though, and looked at May with his dim eyes and wan smile.

"Ah," he gasped, "have you come, my pet, to your poor father? I dreamed about the angels, and now God has sent one."

"He thinks I am his little girl," May whispered to the governess. "He lost one long ago."

They made the room as tidy as they could, and sat down to watch with the dying man. Suddenly he roused, and said, very distinctly:

"Give me the box from the mantelpiece."

May thought his reason had returned, and gave it to him at once, but it dropped from his clutching hands.

"I can't see it," he moaned. "Oh, open it. I must read it again."

He did not know who stood there, from whom he was begging this last service. His eyes were so glazed in death that he could not see her.

May opened it, looked at the words, and a sickening faintness came over her.

"Read it," moaned the dying man, pitifully.

She nerved herself by a heroic effort, beginning:

"'The child you seek was given to Judge Allen Wentworth and his wife. She was called May,'" etc.

Miss Evans uttered a low exclamation at the words.

The dying man seemed suddenly to have the mists of death swept for a moment from his eyes.

"Oh, May," he cried, pitifully, "I did not mean it! Forgive me, my child!" and with that prayer for pardon he was gone.

May sank down by the bedside, weeping convulsively.

The governess was full of pity, but congratulated herself at the same time that all had happened for the best.

Poor Dads never felt the tears his child shed over him, or knew the honors of the funeral, or the grave in the judge's own lot, but he died knowing he had saved his child alive, and we know that must have sweetened every pang, and illuminated the very grave and gate of death itself.

HOW THE JAPANESE AMUSE THEMSELVES.

ITINERANT PERFORMERS.

By Edward Greey.

With the exception of a few companies of actors and the wrestlers, those Japanese who exist by amusing the people are wandering vagabonds, moving from city to city, and living from hand to mouth. The presence of foreigners in their land, and the adoption of Western civilization and garb by the Mikado and court, have worked no change in the lives and costume of the acrobats and conjurers, who to-day give similar entertainments to what they did in the feudal times, before Commodore Perry thundered at the gates of Nihon, and compelled the Shogun to open them to all nations.

A few days before quitting Tokio, I devoted a morning to seeing the street-shows, for which the Eastern capital is famous, and, accompanied by a Japanese friend, started from my house in the southwest suburb and penetrated the dense quarter near the ruins of the castle of O-Shiro. After walking some distance through narrow streets swarming with quaintly dressed natives, some of whom wore clumsily cut American garments, we emerged on a main thoroughfare, gay with signs and colored cloths suspended from the fronts of the stores. Women and nurse-girls, with children secured to their backs, were passing and repassing to and from the markets; boys with shaven pates, costumed in gayly colored robes and girt with silken sashes, from which depended their toys, purses and school-books, were chattering and laughing on their way to school; Buddhist priests, shaven and sleek, glided by as noiselessly as spirits, and glanced half contemptuously at us out of the corners of their eyes, as well they might, remembering that our advent in the land had reduced thousands of their brethren from affluence to abject poverty. Hawkers of fish and fruit, toys and garments, yelled and screamed around us, and, to add to the din, came the shrill cries of the waitresses of a neighboring tea-house, who eagerly invited us to step in, have our feet bathed, and partake of the various delicacies for which their particular establishment was noted.

All was bustle, life and apparent confusion; the latter being increased by the animated gestures of the people, who, while appearing to be quarreling, were merely giving vent to their superabundant spirits.

As we were watching this scene we heard, in the distance, the sound of a tambour and flute, on which some schoolboys passing us halted and the following conversation ensued:

"*Hai*, there, Hikozi!—hear that? The Lion of the Corea is coming this way. Let us stop and witness his antics."

"No, no, Sadakichi; my mother bade me go straight to teacher. It is almost time we were at the school. Come—come!"

"Oh, you lamb (coward)!" cried the first speaker. "I own it is wrong to disobey your parent, and all that, but, indeed, indeed, we have ample time. Stay just a little while—it is good fun to see the lion dance. Surely your mother will not grudge you that delight?"

Hikozi, a handsome, plump little fellow, with a skin like a ripening nut, hesitated, and, I fear, forgot the Japanese golden rule. At all events, he did not betray any further emotion on this subject, but, as the mimickers approached, joined most heartily in shouting a welcome to them.

Nearer came the sound, "rub-a-dub-dub," and presently, towering above the crowd, we beheld the comically hideous face, paper mano and flowing striped cloak of the chief performer, who, elevating or depressing his mask and disguise, looked like a gigantic demon, his antics greatly delighting not only the children, but a following of servant-maids, who, babe on back, marched at the heels of the procession, and indulged in merry remarks and loud laughter.

"Come," said my companion, halting near one of the gateways of a ward-division, marked by a large lantern inscribed with a *mon* (crest); "there is a school down that street, and the acrobats are sure to perform there."

On came the lion, who, emerging from the crowd, advanced toward us, and revealed, beneath his striped cloak, a pair of grimy hands employed in beating a tambour, the lower portion of a human body, clothed in a blue cotton robe, and a pair of sturdy, muscular limbs, the feet of which were protected with straw sandals. Behind him came his orchestra, consisting of a flute-player, a man with a drum and tambour, and a third party beating a cymbal—the combined noise being almost deafening. The lion danced very much in the style of a trained bear, raised and lowered his head-piece—which was fixed upon a bamboo inserted in a socket secured to his back—shouted, roared and growled in a manner ridiculous

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enough to amuse any one; his gestures and capers eliciting yells of approval from our young friends, who, childlike, called him various names, and treated him with half-timid familiarity.

As he was jumping around and diverting them with his contortions, a number of lads came rushing from the side street, and, upon nearing him, began to shout:

"*Hai*—old lion! I hope your excellency is well! Dance lively, now we've come! We're the boys who have the cash! Kick higher—you're not half as smart as the other lion who came here a moon ago!"

The performer, thus adjured, redoubled his endeavors, while his orchestra banged, blew and thumped their instruments—as they did so, uttering shrill cries of encouragement.

The new-comers were as full of monkey-tricks as the acrobat. They threw somersaults in front of him, yelled, pulled at his robe, and, darting at him, inflicted pinches on his limbs that presently roused his temper, and caused him to retaliate with sundry kicks, which, in some instances, were received by his followers; Masters Hikozi and Sadakichi joining in these attacks, and enjoying the sport as greatly as any of the merry rascals.

"*Hai—hai—hai!*" they shouted—"*ha-yakee!*" ("hurry up!").

The lion replied by lowering his head, pulling a string and advancing with open mouth, at the same time uttering most unearthly noises. However, the young Japs did not appear to mind his demonstration, and continued to yell, scream, and amuse themselves as before.

In the midst of this fun, a shaven-headed gentleman, dressed in the garb of a schoolmaster, carrying in his left hand a paper-duster, suddenly emerged from a building on the side street, and called angrily to the boys, saying: "What means this? Are you not aware it is the hour of study?"

At the sound of his voice, the urchins stopped their fun, and, assuming a respectful demeanor, prepared to retire, though I noticed that none of them went off without giving the lion a few cash.

There is nothing small or mean about the average Japanese boy, who, when he has been amused by a performer, pays his cash like a little man.

As the lads were making off, their schoolmaster said to the lion, who was resting from his labor:

"You ought to have more sense than to keep children from their studies. If this sort of thing is repeated, I shall report the matter to the authorities."

"Most excellent teacher," politely replied the lion, "you do us great injustice. We had no idea we were detaining your scholars."

"Very well, then, do not repeat this offense," grumbled the pedagogue. "I will overlook your fault this time."

"I hope your excellency will have good health," said the performer. "Your pupils are perfect young gentlemen."

When the old fellow was out of hearing, the orchestra recommenced its din, and the lion indulged in a pantomimic dance, expressive of defiance to the teacher, which appeared to afford the bystanders the greatest amusement, and brought shouts of laughter from some people who were watching him from the barred side of the porch of a neighboring building. On seeing them, he once more arranged the bamboo in the socket secured to his back, took the string of his tambour between his teeth, and pulling down his lion's robe, grasped his sticks and began to caper and drum as before, while his assistants moved among the crowd and collected money on their fans.

It was amusing to see him, now with his mask lowered almost to the ground, next with it towering aloft like some extinct monster, and again swinging it hither and thither, gaping and gibing as though endowed with life, he all the time shouting and drumming like a crazy man.

Although, at first glance, he appeared to caper at his own sweet will, I soon discovered he performed certain steps, and that he kept admirable time; still, his action had none of the sensuous grace of the female Japanese dancers. It was methodically grotesque, clumsy, coarse, and no doubt of ancient origin.

The lion danced until his patrons refused to contribute another coin, upon discovering which he partly removed his make-up, and, with his companions, squatted near the big lantern, where I had a good opportunity to examine his features. He was probably between thirty and forty years old, muscular and sturdy. His lion-skin was made of paper and hemp, his mask of papier-mâché painted and gilded, and his mane of long strips of tough paper colored yellow and brown. He sat on the ground, sucking at his tiny-bowled brass pipe, and perspiring freely, before him being his tambour and bamboo sticks. As we approached he glanced up, and, blinking his bilious-looking eyes, said:

"I hope your excellencies have approved of my humble performance?"

We replied we had been much entertained; and, after questioning him a while, he said:

"How came I in this business? Ah, that is a long story. My parents died when I was about as big as my drum, and left me to the tender mercy of a relative, by whom I was sold to an acrobat. The latter kicked me into shape, and took me everywhere, training myself and two other miserable orphans as he would have done three apes. When he died, I started business as a Lion of the Corea, and"—laughing—"here I am!"

"How much do you make a day?"

"Ah, now you puzzle me," he merrily replied. "Sometimes we collect quite a sum, at others only make our fish and rice, and when luck is against us, not even our salt. We are always fortunate when we meet your foreign excellencies, who pay us like *daimios*" (noblemen).

After this strong hint, there was nothing for me but to open my purse and give him a silver coin. This brought the entire party to their feet, and set them capering and drumming; whereupon myself and friend made off, leaving the crowd to enjoy the result of our liberality.

"Come," observed my companion, guiding me down a thoroughfare from whence came a savory odor. "This is a famous quarter for fish-sausages. Suppose we eat a few?"

Almost the entire population of the street was engaged in manufacturing the delicacies he mentioned, and, judging by the crowd of customers, they did a thriving trade.

The processes were carried on in sight of the passers-by, and nothing could be neater than the shops, or more appetizing than the rows of sausages laid out ready for purchasers.

Entering a tea-house, situated opposite one of the largest factories, we gave our orders, and, squatting on the matted floor, watched the operations of the workmen across the way.

On the left of the front apartment were crouched a number of men armed with long knives, with which they minced raw fish; others pounded the dried article in wooden mortars; while, on the right, a third gang was cooking a sort of mullet in large pans of boiling oil, placed over an immense circular furnace of stone or cement, heated from below with charcoal.

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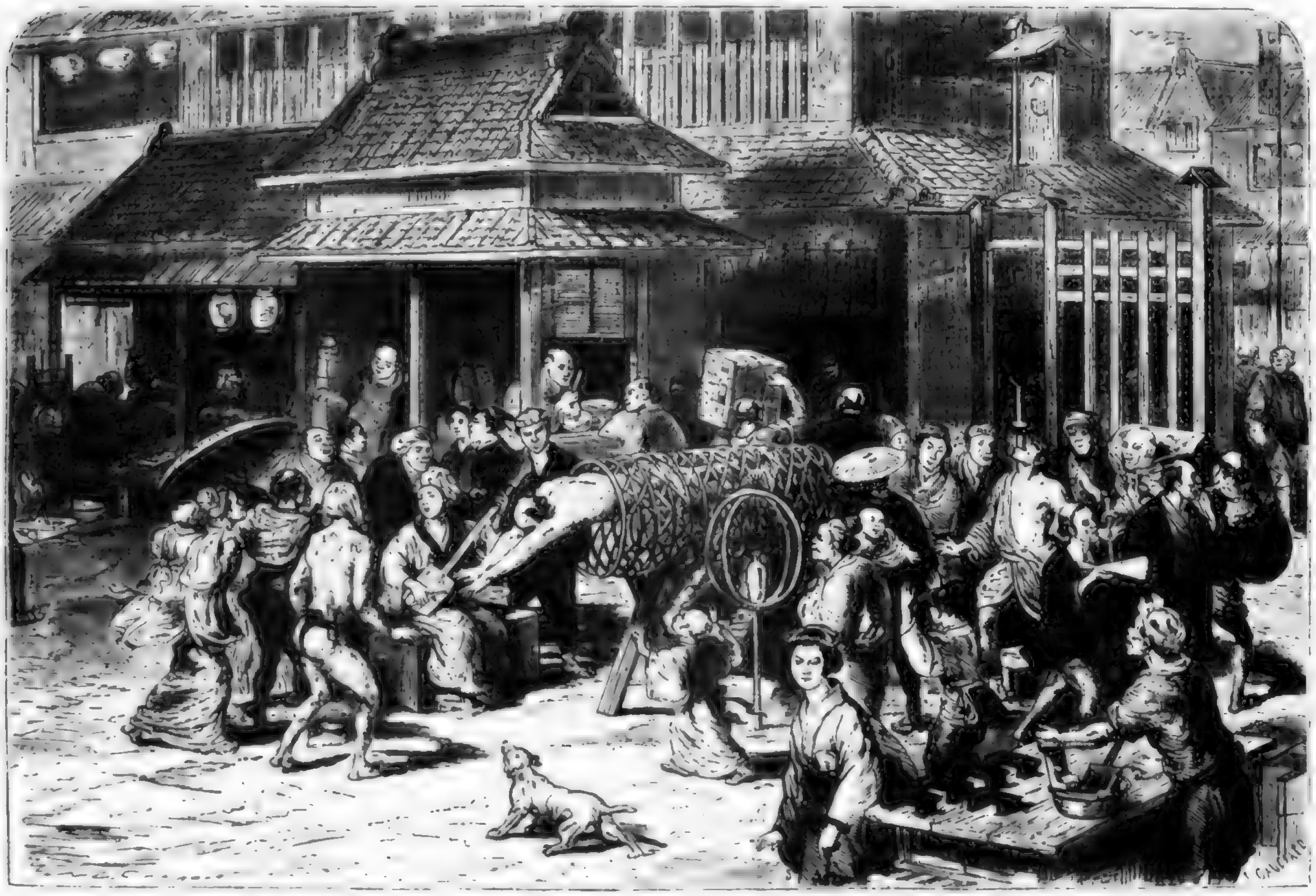
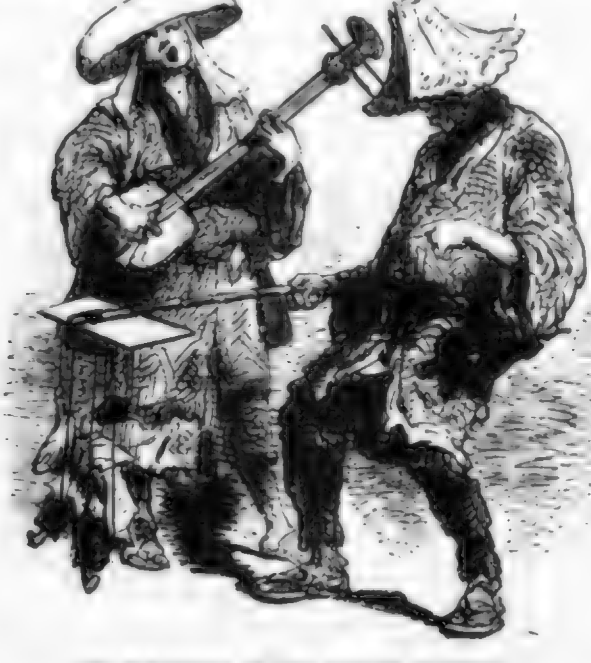


"AT A SIGNAL FROM HIS WIFE HE RAN FORWARD AND DARTED THROUGH THE BASKET WITHOUT TOUCHING IT IN ANY WAY."

"They make three kinds of sausage," remarked my friend—"one, of raw fish, minced very finely, flavored with various herbs, etc., and inclosed in white paper envelopes; another, of dried fish, powdered, seasoned and similarly treated to the first; and a third, of cooked fish—the paper covers of which are colored according to the fancy of the venders."

I beheld the operators make the various varieties he described, and saw them bought up almost as fast as they were exposed for sale.

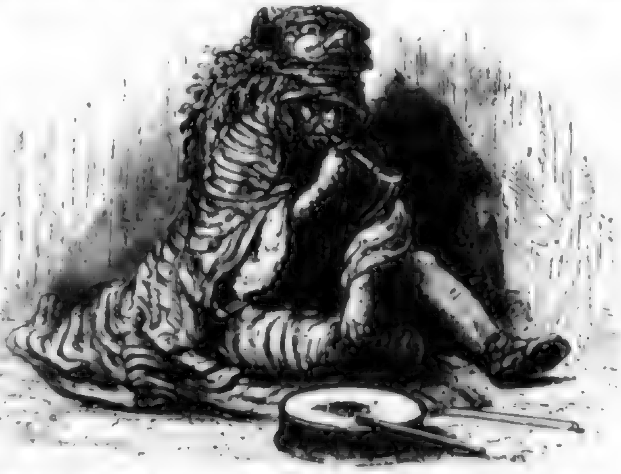
Presently a waitress entered with a tray, and setting it before us on the matted floor, remarked, as she politely bowed her head:



THE EXHIBITION OF THE JUMPING BUDDHIST.

"Your excellencies, I have brought you the sausage of raw fish; also, those made of the dried whale-flesh from Yezo. In a few moments I will have the honor of serving you with some hot sausages made of cooked bass."

I partook of a cup of tea, then tried the first-named food, which, although uncooked, was most delicious. Those prepared from dried whale-flesh were somewhat rank, and I did not relish them; however, I made up for it when I tasted the ones made of cooked fish, which were crisp, delicately seasoned, and altogether a new sensation.



"HE SAT ON THE GROUND, SUCKING AT HIS TINY-BOWLED BRASS PIPE, PERSPIRING FREELY, BEFORE HIM BEING HIS TAMBOUR AND BAMBOO STICKS."

While we were discussing our meal, an acrobat took his stand in the street, and, mounting a pair of high clogs, began to collect a crowd by proclaiming his various feats; his assistant emphasizing his speeches by frantically beating on a tambour placed upon a circular rest.

His proceedings soon attracted the attention of our

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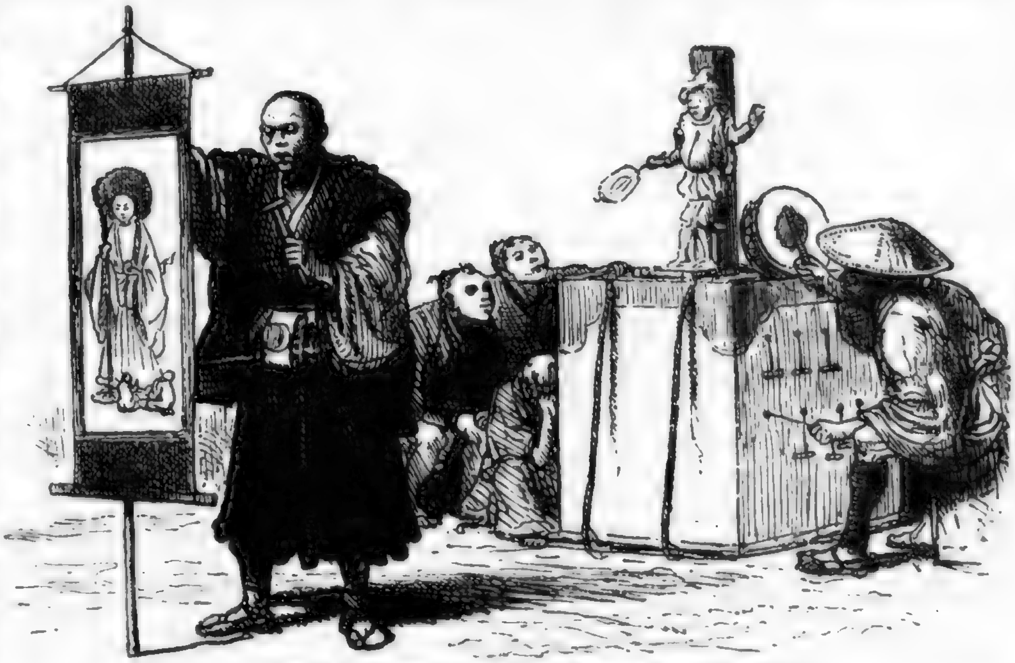
waitresses, who quitted us and swarmed into the veranda. The sausage-makers ceased cutting fish, and rose in order to watch his performance; a woman with a child on her back, who, for some moments, had been noisily engaged in bargaining for a robe with a dealer in second-hand clothes, gave up chaffering, and turned to gaze on the speaker; and two merchants of the old school, wearing flowing robes and their hair in gun-hammer style, halted near by, and gave themselves up to the enjoyment of the moment; while schoolboys, with their light paper books slung from their waists, forgot how late they were, and paused to see what the conjurer would do. The latter evidently had his eye on me, for, after talking awhile, he said:



"A LITTLE FURTHER ON WE CAME ACROSS A PEEP-SHOW."

"Even the gentlemen from afar are delighted to behold my wonderful performances. You must know I take a special delight when exhibiting before them." Aside to the merchants—"They always pay well for being instructed."

"*Hai, hai!*" (Yes, yes!) laughingly observed his assistant. "The *Be-koku-jin* (American men) never give less than a *yen*" (dollar).

This remark caused the crowd to laugh, and drew general attention to myself. However, I was accustomed to being stared at; and I must here testify that, beyond such an exhibition of natural curiosity, I was never annoyed by the Nihonese, who, as a nation, are the most courteous people in the world.

"Now," cried the man, taking a porcelain bottle and two cups from his assistant, and tossing them into the air, "I will proceed to give an exhibition of my ability as a conjurer."

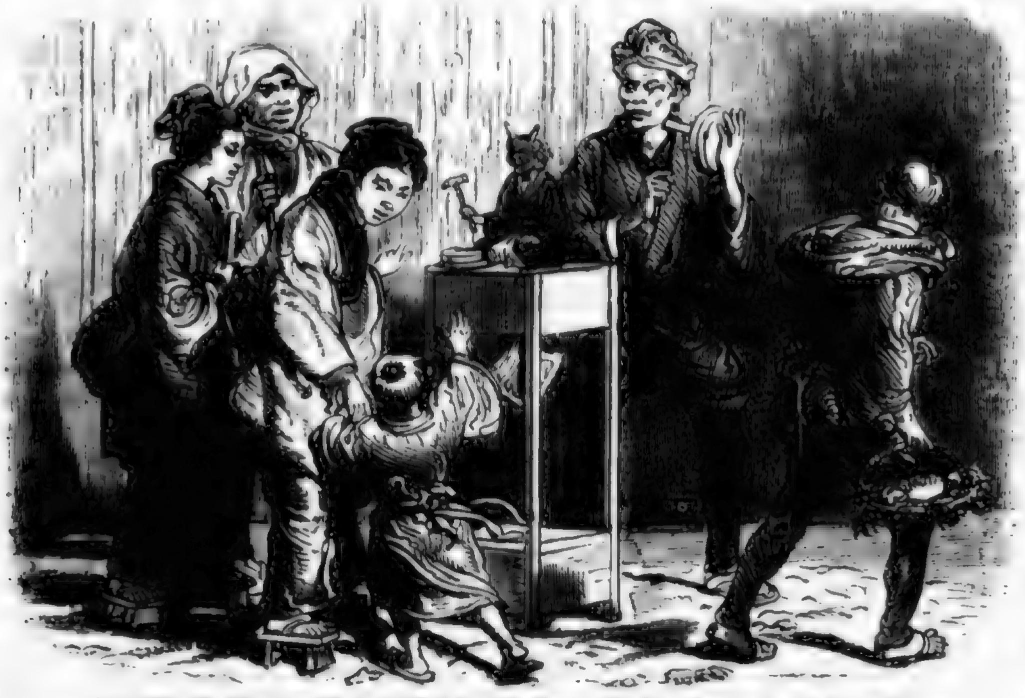
As he said this, his companion rapidly handed him wooden balls, eggs and other articles, until he had a dozen objects spinning in a half-circle over his head; his performance being accompanied by his aid, who watched him anxiously, uttered unearthly yells and drummed as though his life depended upon his vigorous blows.

The whirling accessories were one by one discarded, and presently the last—an egg—dropped into his right hand, when, cracking it upon his forehead, he drew out a long thread until he literally smothered a small boy in its tangle. There appeared to be miles of it stowed away in his palm, and, as the color of the stuff changed from red to blue, blue to green, and back to red, he shouted:

"*Hai, hai, hai!* You ladies who complain of short measure in your sewing-thread should buy where I do. Seudo, on Yeast Street, sells the best article in Tokio."

When the head of the lad who was standing beneath him was completely hidden in the substance, the conjurer threw the egg into the air, whereupon it changed into a paper butterfly, and was blown over the neighboring house out of sight.

"Now," he said, producing a sheet of paper and dexterously crushing it in his extended palm, "I'll show the honorable gentleman from afar where our flies come from."



"A FOURTH, WHO DROVE A LIVELY TRADE, EXHIBITED THE FIGURE OF A DEMON."

He unclosed his fingers and exhibited the paper, compressed into the form of a ball, that gradually expanded and released a cloud of blue-bottles. This was his last feat, and it certainly deserved the reward which we bestowed upon him—a silver *yen*, which he apparently swallowed, and then drew from the nose of the small boy who had so patiently submitted to being covered with the colored thread.

After calling for our reckoning, amounting to a few cash over seventeen cents, we quitted the tea-house, and sauntered toward the Nihon Bridge, where, hearing the murmur of a crowd, and the "ping, ping" of a *samisen* (guitar), we followed the

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sound, and presently found ourselves in an open space, where four streets met, in which we beheld a number of acrobats and jugglers performing to an admiring audience.

Having sought shelter in a tea-house, we proceeded to watch the scene, noticing which, the artists redoubled their efforts, and vied with each other in attracting our attention.

To our left was a clog-maker staining the wooden articles with a broad, flat brush, dipped in a black liquid; as he did so, mingling his shouts of approval with those of the other spectators.

The space chosen was near a ward-gate, right in the centre of the traffic; and on the left were a range of open-fronted stores, occupied by toy-makers, clock manufacturers, tailors and pipe-makers, who worked quite calmly, and did not appear to notice the exhibition, which consisted of a sword-juggler, two acrobats, and a shrill-voiced dame, who played the *samisen* and encouraged the artists by voice and gestures.

Notwithstanding the presence of ladies, the acrobats had reduced their costume to one of primitive simplicity—in fact, to mere harness; however, as no one appeared to notice it, I concluded it was nothing uncommon, and, after all, they were almost as fully dressed as our own athletes.

The performance, which had ceased as we entered, recommenced by one of the men thrusting a naked sword down his throat, and inviting the spectators to feel the point under the skin below his ribs. This appeared to greatly interest the servant-girls and children, who were loud in their exclamations of wonder and approval. He advanced, with extended hands, across the road, and entering the veranda of the tea-house, requested us to satisfy ourselves that he had swallowed the weapon; and there certainly was a lump, like a sword-point, in the place we have described; still, I could not credit it was anything but a trick.

Upon our offering him a cup of *saké*, he drew the blade from his throat and refreshed himself with a drink; after which, in reply to our questions, he stated his age was thirty, and that he belonged to the province of Yamato. He, however, declined to repeat the performance, or to permit us to closely examine the sword, saying he had a sore throat, and it was not respectful to exhibit a naked weapon.

While we were chatting with him, his companions had set up a stick, on which they vertically balanced two hoops and a porcelain bottle. They also produced a long, bottomless basket, made of split bamboo, such as, in Japan, is used for carrying wild animals to market. This they set on two low horses of wood, like a saw-buck.

Our friend, the sword-swallower, then excused himself, and directing our attention to his associates, retired, when, glancing across the street, we saw one of them, whose head was bound with a towel, and who carried a pipe and tobacco-pouch thrust in his girdle, step back in the direction of the ward-gate; then, lowering his head, run toward the hoops, and springing from the ground, dart through them without disturbing the bottle, hoops, or stick on which the latter stood.

His feat elicited shouts of approval from the spectators and a complimentary remark from the guitar-player, who, redoubling her efforts, twanged the instrument with marvelous rapidity, and uttered cries suggestive of cholera morbus. As she swiftly passed her ivory instrument over the strings—for no Japanese ever uses her fingers in playing the *samisen*—she threw back her head, closed her eyes, and yelled:

"Ya—a————————ooo!
Ha——————i——————i!
Hoo——————————ah!
Yee——————————ai!"

"What does she mean?" I inquired of my companion. "I cannot make any sense of her exclamations."

My friend smiled significantly, and replied:

"What do you mean when you cry, ''Rah, 'rah'? She is cheering her husband, encouraging him to perform the next feat."

Once more glancing at the troupe, we saw the third man, who was even more simply clothed than his comrades, back among the crowd, and, at a signal from his wife, run forward and dart through the basket without touching it in any way. He landed upon his hands, threw a somersault, and, dropping upon his knees, bowed respectfully to us, crying:

"Your excellencies, a little encouragement. Mine is very hard work!"

We rewarded him, on which his wife placed three lighted candles in the basket, and he repeated his jump, without displacing or extinguishing either of them.

The crowd soon became so dense that we could not see the rest of the peformance, finding which we quitted the tea-house, crossed the Nihon Bashi Bridge, and made our way toward Asakusa, pausing on the road to watch a man dance a doll dressed to represent a jumping Buddhist, a sect similar to our Shaking Quakers. The exhibitor was both ragged and dirty, and his comrade, who sang vilely and played upon a dilapidated *samisen*, was, if anything, a greater scarecrow; notwithstanding which the dancing doll was dressed in gorgeous array, and the performance attracted a crowd of children, who imitated the antics of the puppet and shouted vociferously.

A little further on we came across a blind *bonze*, carrying a picture of Kuanon, to which he attracted attention by striking on a bell fastened to his belt. We also saw a peep-show, surrounded by children squatting on the ground and peering through slits in the front as they listened attentively to the proprietor, who chanted descriptions of the various scenes, and, at the same time, instructed his patrons in moral maxims; one speech I noted down being as follows:

"Oh, yes—oh, yes! Here you behold the great goddess, Kuanon, rescuing a pious maiden from a snake in human shape. Kuanon did this because the damsel was humane to animals. Now, my master-boys, I advise you never to hurt dogs or cats, or to shoot birds—it is sinful."

"*Hai-hai!*" cried the youngsters. "Go on with the next picture!"

The showman beat his tambour and jerked the strings of a doll suspended from an upright on the top of his box, then treated them to another scene and appropriate proverb. It reminded me of poor Artemus Ward's moral waxworks. I was greatly amused to see those who had not the necessary cash stoop and peer over the heads of their more fortunate companions, as though deriving some comfort from inspecting the outside of the apparatus—child-nature is the same all over the world. When the last view had been exhibited the man stooped, placed his arms within the ropes secured to the side of the box, and rising, walked off, followed by the blind *bonze*, who, laying his hand on the oiled-paper covering of the peep-show, was guided to the next stopping-place.

As we neared the Asakusa quarter we saw a number of fortune-tellers, who used various expedients in order to attract customers. One had a bird, another a trained dog, and a third a crystal ball, while a fourth, who drove a lively trade, exhibited a figure of a demon mounted on a stand. At first I thought the object was alive, it rising at the command of its exhibitor, striking a gong when he rapped upon his tambour, and seating itself at his bidding; however, upon closer inspection, I discovered it was merely a marionette, moved by strings led down the hollow supports of its stand and tied to the mobile toes of the exhibitor's right foot. By crooking these he could make the demon rise, squat, strike the gong, nod and shake its hideous head. To use a common expression, the man's toes were all fingers.

While we were watching his movements a woman advanced to have her fortune told, and after handing a few cash to the demon received a printed paper from the wise man. Selecting a certain combination of numbers, she requested the fortune-teller to explain them, when he assumed a profound expression of face, and said:

"A sixth day camellia! Madam, you are too late for what you wish. Try again, it is only ten cash."

By this he referred to a saying equivalent to our "You are a day after the fair"; in other words, she wanted to obtain an impossibility.

"Pauf!" she ejaculated; "you always give me bad omens! I would like to know when my husband will return from Osaka?"

"Pay again, and try another chance. Take some of the last numbers—they are really fortunate ones."

The woman sullenly withdrew her hand into the ample pocket of her sleeve, and produced the amount he named; after which she selected a second combination, and he presently observed:

"Hearing is paradise—excellent! That means you will shortly hear good news from Osaka. Divide the numbers you selected by four—result, eight. You will welcome your honorable husband in eight days."

This appeared to comfort her, for she retired smiling, leaving the crowd wondering at the man's knowledge.

Although the uneducated Nihonese, like our own ignorant masses, believe in such absurdities, none of the more enlightened ones put any faith in them, and the incident I have here described was particularly annoying to my companion, who indignantly remarked:

"Such idiots as that one give our people a reputation for gross superstition. I trust you will explain this matter to your countrymen, and tell them all intelligent Japanese condemn fortune-telling, clairvoyance, spiritualism and similar trickery?"

I informed him I would do as he requested, at the same time explaining there were, in enlightened America, thousands of persons just as credulous as the woman whom we had seen duped; on hearing which, he naïvely remarked:

"I suppose every nation has its fools."

"Shall I tell your fortune, *sama* (my lord)?" inquired the proprietor of the marionette, as he poised it on one limb. "I can serve you just as well as though you were a Nihonese."

"No, thank you," I replied; "I am quite contented to remain ignorant with regard to the future."

The fellow waited until we turned to depart, when, uttering a derisive yell, he remarked to the grinning crowd:

"Yah! What can we expect from men who have hair on their faces, like the *ebisu* (savages)? One might as well seek to instruct a stone as teach such blockheads."

We left him scolding at the top of his voice, beating his tambour and dancing his figure, in order to attract more victims, and directed our steps toward a spot from whence proceeded the cries of some youthful acrobats and the noise of a drum. The troupe consisted of four boys and a tall, lantern-jawed old man, who, as we approached, urged them to redouble their efforts and move lively.

On our right was a tobacconist's shop, open to the street, in which sat a woman sorting the weed, while her son watched the antics of the dancers and amused himself with a bobtail cat. The outside screen of the store was decorated with pictures denoting the business, and bore the name and address of the proprietor; and suspended from a copper rod, driven in the corner-post of the building, was a gigantic sign—the head of the god Daruma, enveloped in tobacco-leaves.

This deity is evidently a favorite with the lower orders of Japanese and the children, who fashion their snow-men in his image. As the legend runs, he was a disciple of Buddha, who remained so long in a squatting position, praying, that his limbs rubbed off.

Upon learning of our presence, the dancing boys uttered shrill cries, threw somersaults and contorted themselves, as they did so shaking their hideous red masks and waving their rooster-feather plumes to the sound of their leader's tambour, while, to increase the din, two girls, armed with *samisens*, stationed themselves across the way, and began to thrum and sing at the top of their voices. Two of the boys carried long drums, which they from time to time beat vigorously, and all of them danced and performed acrobatic tricks.

When their proprietor heard the sound of the girls' voices, he struck his tambour harder than before, and began to sing a well-known song from the poem of the "Forty-seven Ronins":

"O-co oyazo dono sonokano,
Kochirayo kashito gun nau se,
Yoo chibewa bikkuro giotenshi."

This he delivered in a querulous voice, shaking out the last word of each line in a most comical fashion, and opening his mouth sideways, just as our street-singers do when delivering sustained notes. The song is almost untranslatable, and is of considerable length, the story relating to an old man who is stopped and killed by a robber, the latter being subsequently dispatched by the patriarch's son-in-law.

Although his singing had an exceedingly depressing effect upon us, it appeared to exhilarate the youthful acrobats, who spun on one foot, drummed and gave way to the excitement of the moment, as though really enjoying it. At the word of command, one of them bent his body in the form of an arch, while the other, mounting on his companion's stomach, stood upon his hands and elevated his feet in the air. Then the man threw down his tambour, and shouting to the lads, bade them climb upon his shoulders. The drummers unstrung their instruments and, retaining their head-dresses, ascended his body, presently standing erect on his shoulders, whereupon he signaled another to climb upon them. Up went the blindfolded boy; and when he was in position, the fourth youngster slowly mounted and presently stood erect, twelve feet from the ground.

When this was accomplished, the performers began to wag their masks and sing; as they did so, the man turned slowly round and round, then advanced toward us and gave a shrill cry, on which the uppermost lad dropped into the arms of the one beneath him, then to the two next, and from them to the ground, the others following him; and the performance winding up by the entire party spinning round us on their hands and feet, yelling and screaming like Indians.

It was astonishing to see how limber the old man was; he went over and over ten times in succession, and repeated the feat until both himself and his pupils were completely exhausted, after which he approached us and respectfully solicited a reward.

He said the lads were his grandchildren, that their parents were dead, and that his wife and himself subsisted on the proceeds of their exhibition—adding:

"They go to school, and are saving money to enable them to visit the United States and make their fortunes."

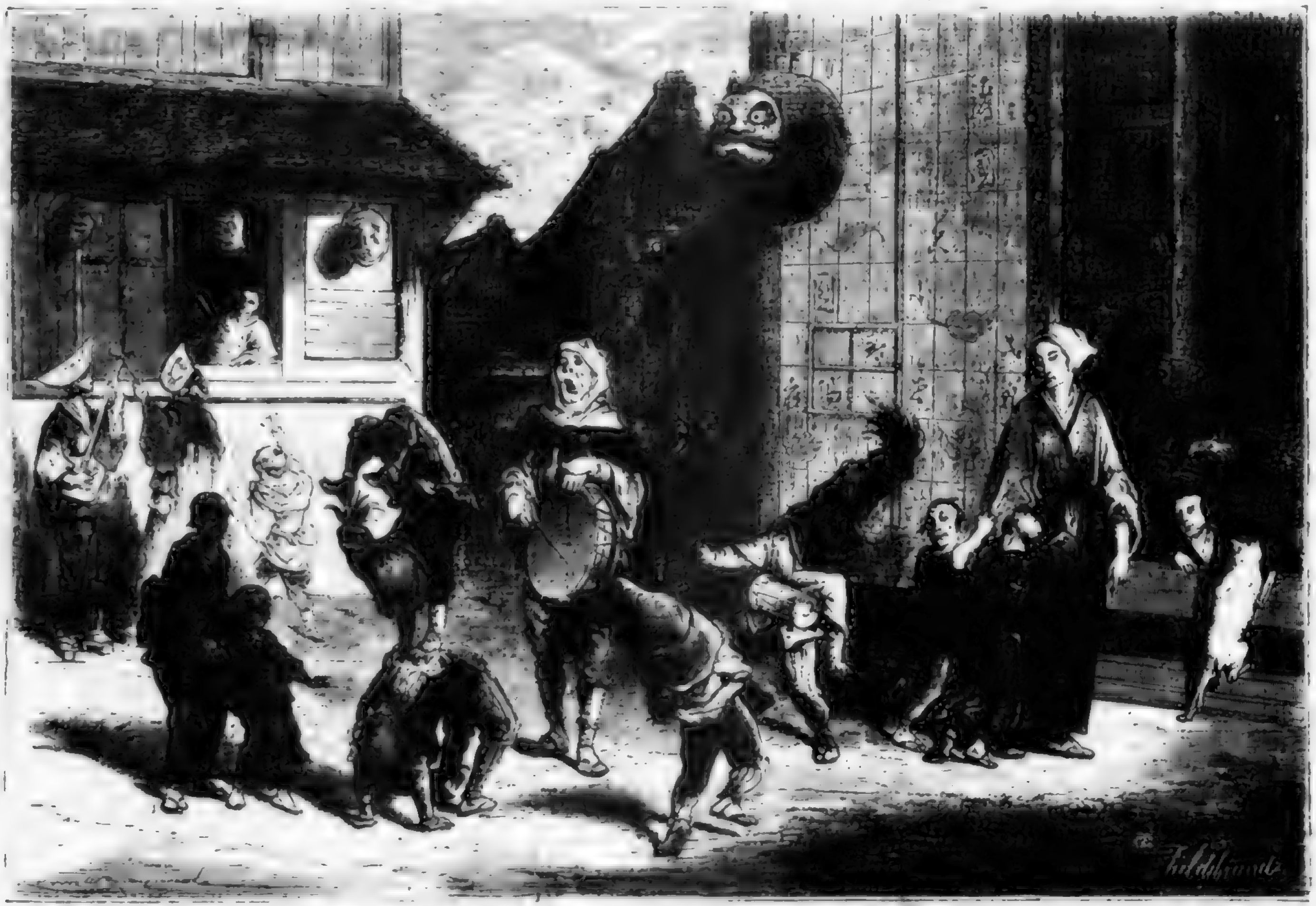
The boys removed their head-pieces, and we saw they were healthy looking and full of fun. One of them asked if everybody in America was rich; and another, whether we all owned watches. We chatted with them for a while, among other things learning they seldom used salt and had never partaken of flesh meat, that their principal diet was rice, and their names were Choshichi, Seibeye, Kichiyemon and Zensaburo.

We gave the old fellow a gratuity, and left them clustered round a dealer in bean-curd, the centre of an admiring group of youngsters, who evidently regarded them as heroes. Feeling tired, we entered *jin-riki-shas* (man-drawn carriages), and returned home, upon reaching which we overheard terrible lamentations on the part of my servant's wife. When I inquired the cause of her agitation, she brought forward her sons, two black-eyed, merry little fellows, aged four and six, and pointing to the elder, whose features were somewhat disfigured by a fall, excitedly replied:

"Yes, yes, your excellency! This all comes of permitting those vagabond acrobats to give their exhibitions on the streets—they are the ruin of our children! See! my Taro has been endeavoring to imitate them; he climbed onto Otokichi's shoulders, tumbled, and cracked his nose-bone. I wish the Mikado would abolish the rascals who teach our sons such dangerous tricks!"

As I glanced at the innocent-looking delinquents, I thought of my boyish days, so pleaded for them; reminding the indignant mother there was very little difference between Young America and Young Japan, and that both were equally delighted with the antics of itinerant performers.

Five minutes afterward I saw Taro and Otokichi in the back yard, the former representing the Lion of the Corea, and the latter beating his mother's pillow in place of a tambour.



HOW THE JAPANESE AMUSE THEMSELVES.—"THE TROOP CONSISTED OF FOUR BOYS AND AN OLD LANTERN-JAWED MAN."—SEE PAGE 34.

HANDSOME, HAUGHTY, HATEFUL HARRY HALSTEAD.

By Harriet P. Spofford.

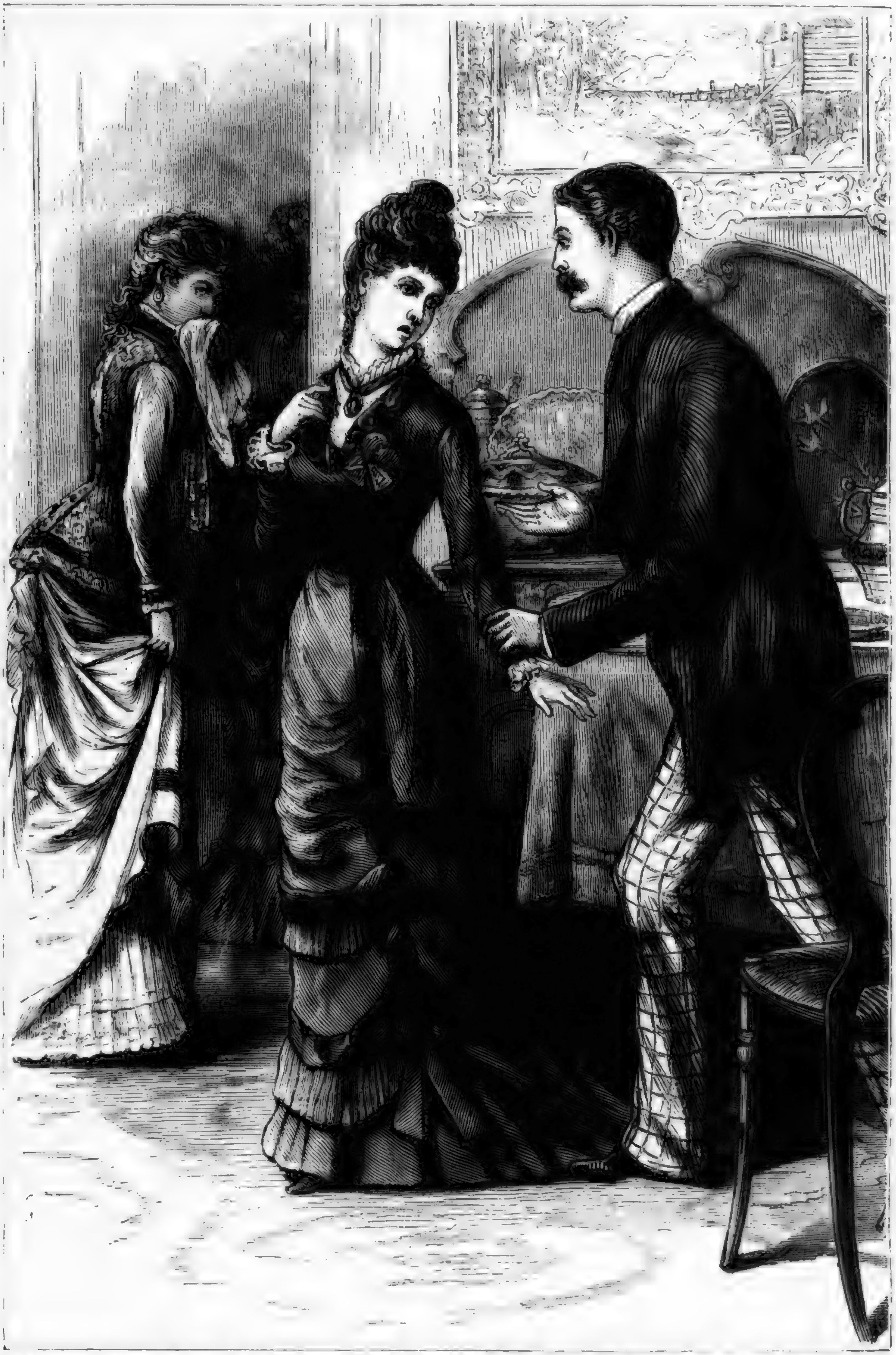
"And that handsome, haughty, hateful Harry Halstead!" was the end of Miss Kate's account of the company she had seen at the theatre last night; an account given at the table that bright April morning, after she had examined the crocuses pushing through the drift of melting snow beneath the window.

Kate was alone with Mary in the breakfast-room, the father and mother having finished and gone for a *tête-à-tête* in the library, after their wont.

"Harry Halstead is his name, handsome he certainly is, haughty he may be; but why you should call him hateful, that splendid fellow!—and our own cousin, too——" began Mary.

"I don't suppose," cried Miss Kate, "that anybody could be hateful and be our own cousin! What angels we Halsteads are! He's hateful because he's so wickedly proud, because he holds his head so high, because he never will forget his absurd dignity, because he is so afraid of being under an obligation, of being imposed on, of——"

"Oh, stop, stop, Kate! You just mean that he's hateful because he won't propose to Laura."



HANDSOME, HAUGHTY, HATEFUL HARRY HALSTEAD.—"JUST AS SHE PASSED THE CORNER OF THE TABLE A HAND WAS LAID UPON HER ARM. 'ARE YOU SORRY, LAURA, THAT AT LAST YOU ARE AS POOR AS I AM?' SAID HARRY HALSTEAD."

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"Well, why won't he propose to Laura? Here he's been hovering round for a year. He can't keep out of her way. He's succeeded in getting her thin, and sleepless, and pale and melancholy, and himself as blue as the ghost in 'Hamlet.' You ought to have seen how white she was last night, with her great eyes never off the stage. I wouldn't let her get up this morning. And there he halts without another word, just because he has nothing but his little salary, and she has a half-million of money. And papa wants them to marry, and he's papa's nephew; and mamma wants it, and she's mamma's niece; and papa would give him a house—and I think it's an obstinate ingratitude——"

"Nonsense! I'm sure *I'm* not able to see how anybody can blame him. A man that *is* a man, wants to bestow upon his wife; he doesn't want his wife bestowing on him——"

"Pshaw! Wasn't papa a man? And you know the money all came on mamma's side. If she loves him, and he knows it will give her the very top of happiness to do the 'bestowing'—bestowing of what she doesn't value a whit in comparison to his love—I call it very selfish in him not to let her."

"Well, you're not a man."

"Thank goodness, no!"

"And you know you haven't put it fairly. Harry was living with us when Laura came here, and apparently the very moment he found himself interested in her he moved off. It did make me feel so badly to see his self-contained way—Harry Halstead—that all the women are half-distracted——"

"Oh, I know all about that. Of course, he's a superb fellow, or else Laura wouldn't care for him——"

"And he has come here since, only when he had to come—on the Mondays and Thursdays—to help papa about the work he undertook for him two years ago. *I* think he has shown himself a man of principle; and it makes me admire him; and so it does Laura—more's the pity—and I've no doubt she'd rather be poor as a church mouse——"

"It doesn't make *me* admire him! You talk as if there were nothing but money in the world—as if the contemptible accident of wealth were a crime for which one must pay penalty. If he isn't coming to the point he ought to go away. He'd better go to Africa, to the moon—anywhere! Fooling round Laura and breaking her heart!—oh, how I'd like to make a fool of *him!* And this is April Fool's Day, isn't it?" cried Kate, with a sudden thought, her finger on her pretty lips. "An April Fool of Harry Halstead," she said, slowly—"of Harry Halstead—just think of his wrath! My gracious, I do wish I could! I do believe I can! I declare to goodness I will!"

And therewith she burst into a gale of laughter that rang through the house, and might have horrified the handsome Harry, who at that moment opened the door and grimly made his salutations just as Laura Devonsdale entered the breakfast-room from the other side.

Yes, she was very white, as Kate had said, although, just at that instant, the faintest dream of a flush suffused her face, as if the light fell on it through the rose she held. And what a face it was!—perfect in outline as those faces cut upon gems; so soft and sweet, too, in its pure moldings, with something touching about the curves of the lovely lips, the innocent appeal of the long-lashed, dark-gray eyes, with sapphire gleams in them; the white brow, with the rings of dark hair breaking out irrepressibly about it—a face wanting nothing but the vital color, whose eyes lit it up with a sort of splendor of intelligence, and whose smile made it half heavenly. And it was quite plain that Harry Halstead thought and felt all this in the same instant that he glanced at her with a heightened color of his own and asked for his uncle.

"He's talking with mamma in the library," said Kate, "and won't want to be disturbed just yet. Some bank or other has broken, that they seem to be very sorry over. There's a perfect murrain on these banks——"

"I wish they'd all break, confound them!" said Harry, moodily, his head on his hand as he sat at the table with them.

"Why, where are the letters this morning, Mary?" asked Kate. "Ah, there comes the sable Mercury now!" and she fell to opening her voluminous correspondence, the remnant of schooldays, while Mary poured Harry a cup of coffee after his morning walk, and Laura sat playing with her toast, and absently listening to Mary's efforts to keep a smooth face on things.

"Oh, my goodness!" suddenly cried Kate, with a start of alarm, and then picking up the letter she had dropped and relapsing into silence.

"What is it?—what's the matter? Why—why don't you speak, Kate?" came the chorus.

"Dear me! What's what?" answered Kate, glancing up.

"The news," said Mary, "that made you start so?"

"That?" said Kate, a little nervously and hesitatingly. "Oh, nothing whatever!" impatiently going back to her letter.

"Kate," cried Mary, "I declare I know better. Why, your hand is trembling like a leaf!"

"How ridiculous!" cried Kate. "What perfect nonsense!" And then, looking round at the inquiring faces, she began to work herself into a passion, after the manner of her father. "I never knew anything like you! You can't let any one even read their letters in peace!" she exclaimed. "It's enough to exasperate a saint! You'd try the patience of Job himself!"

"But, Kate, what are you so excited about?" persisted Mary.

"I'm not excited. You'd excite a stone with your questions. Why should I be excited because Burgess Brothers ask for an extension from their creditors? That's what I exclaimed for, if you will know."

"Burgess Brothers!" whispered Laura.

"Burgess! I don't wonder you started. Burgess! Are you sure? Why, Laura, your interest——," began Mary.

"I think it can't be the same," said Laura, gently, getting her breath. "It must be a mistake. I had my statement of account——"

"Isn't half your fortune in their hands?" cried Kate, with a manner mollified to the extent of appearing the least bit ashamed of her outburst.

"Yes, indeed. But it always has been. It's perfectly safe. Papa left it there."

"Well, if this is true, it's gone glimmering, I guess. You'll have to get along with the other half; and that's too much for you, the communists will say. However, you've always said you wished you were poorer."

"To be sure," said Laura. "But one says many things, and we talk lightly of what we know nothing about. I should be sorry if I couldn't take care of my old women and keep my girls at school——"

"And your hospital-going, and your public kitchen, and your city missionary, and——"

Laura laughed, and looked deprecatingly at Harry.

"She's telling fairy stories," she said.

"Perhaps you won't think them all so fairy-like, presently," said Kate, in a moment or two, still looking at her

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letter, "if Burgess Brothers have failed; that may be what papa was talking about in the library—they ran the Brown National Bank, you know. And if that bursts like a bubble—why, Laura, Laura Devonsdale!" cried Kate, starting from her chair and running round to her. "Oh, you poor dear—you poor little darling!" she exclaimed, with her arms round Laura's neck. "What under the sun are you sitting quietly as that for? Don't you know that your funds are as deep in the Brown National as a drowned man is in the sea? And if that's failed, it can only be because the Transmigration Railway went down first, and Uncle Devonsdale built that railway, and all the rest of your property is in it! No more fit to manage property," cried Kate, starting to her feet again. "All your eggs in one basket——"

"Kate," cried Mary, "Kate, be still!—be quiet! What do you mean, you cruel girl? If papa wanted Laura to know all this, he'd tell her himself, instead of staying to talk it over with mamma. He'd never let it come like a shower-bath, this way, either. And I don't believe there's a word of truth in it! I think it's positively shameful in you——"

"Indeed, indeed, Mary," said Laura, coming round and taking both of Mary's indignant hands, "it isn't really worth making such a fuss about——"

"Hundreds of thousands of dollars are not worth making such——"

"No, indeed," she said, with rather a weary tone; "nothing is. You see it doesn't break *my* heart. Look at me," and she was positively laughing, with a carnation on her cheek, and a glisten like the flying gleam of hope itself in her eye. "I'm much more sorry for Burgess Brothers themselves. I've no doubt I shall be a great deal happier, any way. Of course, there'll be a little something left, and Uncle Halstead will let me always live with you——"

"Always?" exclaimed Kate. "Don't you ever mean to marry? *I* do."

"Perhaps nobody would have me," said Laura, a little bit demurely, and her eyes drooped over the deep blush on the velvet cheek.

Harry rose and stalked to the window, and Kate, swallowing a gulp of her coffee the wrong way, apparently, was seized with such a fit of choking and coughing that, almost black in the face, she had to run from the room, and Mary, well frightened, swept after her. Perhaps Laura would have followed, but just as she passed the corner of the table, a hand was laid upon her arm.

"Are you sorry, Laura, that at last you are as poor as I am?" said Harry Halstead.

But once outside the door, the coughing-fit suddenly subsided, and seizing Mary by the shoulders, Kate whirled her along the hall and through the next door, and into the furthest recess of the drawing-room.

"If you go back to that pair for three-quarters of an hour, I'll never speak to you again!" she whispered, fiercely.

And pushing Mary into the sleepy-hollow chair, she threw herself upon her sister's knees, in order to keep her prisoner, and broke into hysterical laughter, with alternating bursts of tears and a wasteful kissing of the startled, trembling, amazed and angry Mary in between.

"If that doesn't answer, nothing will!" she cried. "And you may just be as angry with me as you please, Mary mine. Did you think I was angry with you in there? I played it off well, then. I'd no idea I was the actress I am. You can't get up—it's of no use to try," giving her a little shake and then a hug. "And when you do, you may tell papa anything you choose. But I don't believe it will hurt either of them, and, I dare say, you will be glad enough to dance at the wedding, miss.

> "'Come, haste to the wedding!
> Come, haste to the wedding!'"

sang the giddy girl, and springing up and catching the two sides of her skirts, she danced to her reflection in the long mirror such a jig as nobody would ever have dreamed could have profaned that Axminster.

But just as Kate was in the act of this profanity, her father, having ended his morning conference with mamma, had passed into the breakfast-room for the paper he had left there.

You may imagine that he started back in some hot surprise at the tableau which met his gaze, and that two other people started back with equal suddenness from each other's arms, their faces flushing like clouds at sunrise, and one of them certainly looking lovelier that minute than she ever did before.

"Harry!" cried his uncle. "Laura! You don't mean to say that this has been going on without my——"

"Oh, uncle, uncle!" cried the girl, darting to the old gentleman's side, and hiding her blushes and her overflowing tears in his breast; "I am so glad I lost it! I never should have found Harry if I hadn't lost it!"

"If you hadn't lost what, pray?"

"Oh, the money, you know, uncle—my inheritance, my fortune—though I shouldn't call that fortune when Harry's love is so much greater fortune."

"Have you gone mad?" said the old gentleman. "What sort of nonsense are you talking? There's nothing the matter with your fortune. Where the deuce did you get that idea?"

"Kate," began Harry, coming forward manfully to the rescue—"Kate has told us, and has conferred the greatest blessing on us that——"

"Blessing be hanged, you pair of idiots!" roared the benign old gentleman. "Kate!"—and a strange light was dawning over his ruddy and ruddier face. "I might have known as much. That is what the riot in the parlor means. Wait a moment."

And releasing Laura, somewhat to Harry's peace of mind, he slammed the door behind him. And to Kate, in the middle of her unrighteous rites, suddenly appeared her father.

Five minutes afterward, the door, that had scarcely ceased quivering from its slamming, gently opened, and a face, over which the curls were falling in gypsy-like confusion, put itself in, followed by the rest of a person, and a toilet in disorder proper to jig-dancers.

"I hope you haven't been quarreling while I have been gone," said Kate, standing humbly with her hands folded before her. "I couldn't get here any sooner, for I had to stop and make papa finish my jig with me. Fancy! oh, he has no breath left in his dear old body! I came back to tell you that the Transmigration Railway hasn't gone down, after all, or gone up, or gone under, or gone anywhere. So it's all a mistake, you see, about the bursting of the Brown National. It was not that bank, but another, about which papa and mamma were talking, it seems; they were talking of the bank whereon the wild times blow, drawing on their youth, you know, and the bank refusing to honor the draft. And, by-the-way, it was the Burgess Brothers, ship-chandlers, down on Broad Wharf, that failed, and not your Burgess Brothers, by any means, Laura. Your property is all right; and papa's as——"

"Oh, Kate, Kate!" cried Laura.

"Kate!" exclaimed Harry, in stern dismay.

But Laura had already turned, as if to throw her arms

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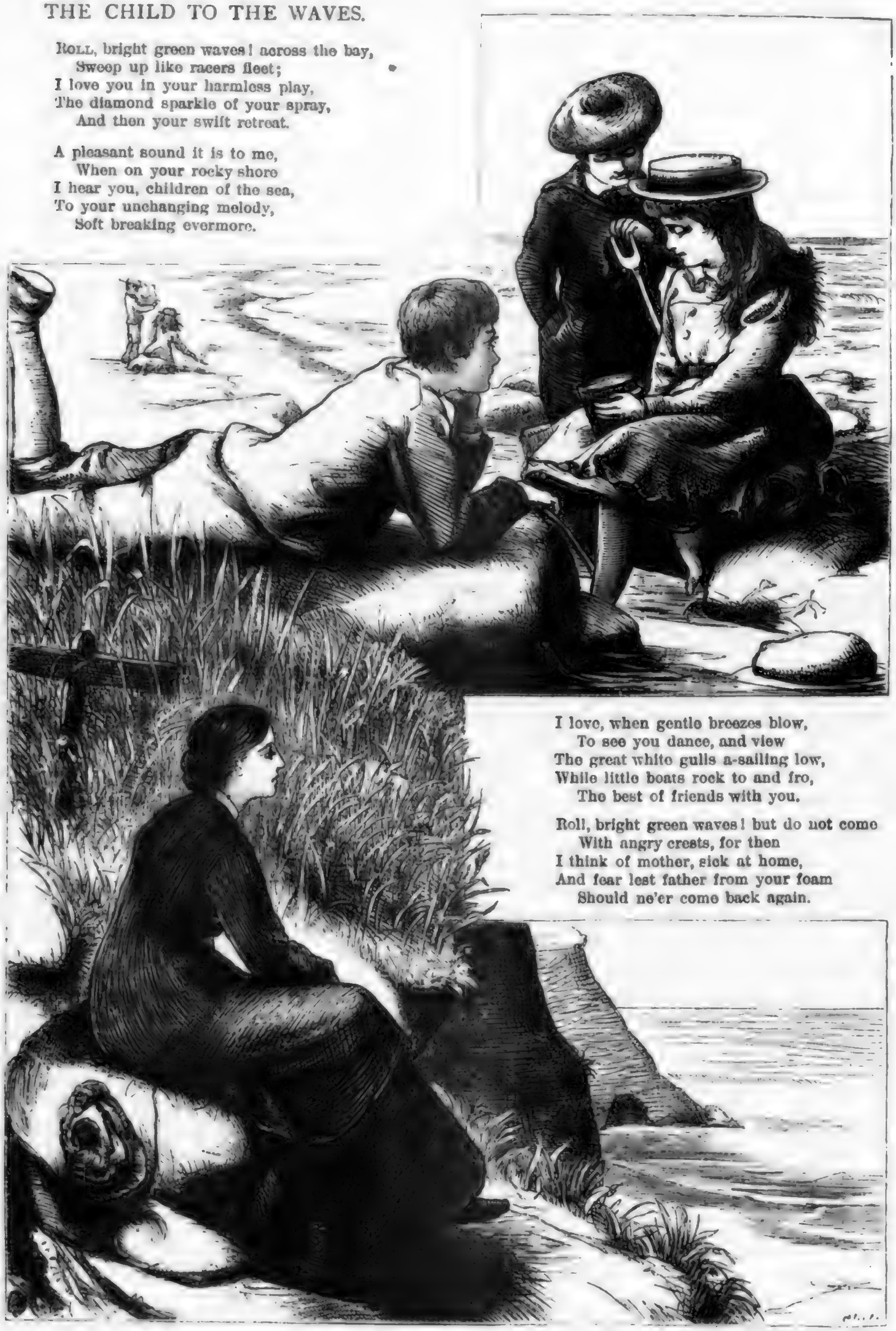
THE CHILD TO THE WAVES.

ROLL, bright green waves! across the bay,
Sweep up like racers fleet;
I love you in your harmless play,
The diamond sparkle of your spray,
And then your swift retreat.

A pleasant sound it is to me,
When on your rocky shore
I hear you, children of the sea,
To your unchanging melody,
Soft breaking evermore.



I love, when gentle breezes blow,
To see you dance, and view
The great white gulls a-sailing low,
While little boats rock to and fro,
The best of friends with you.

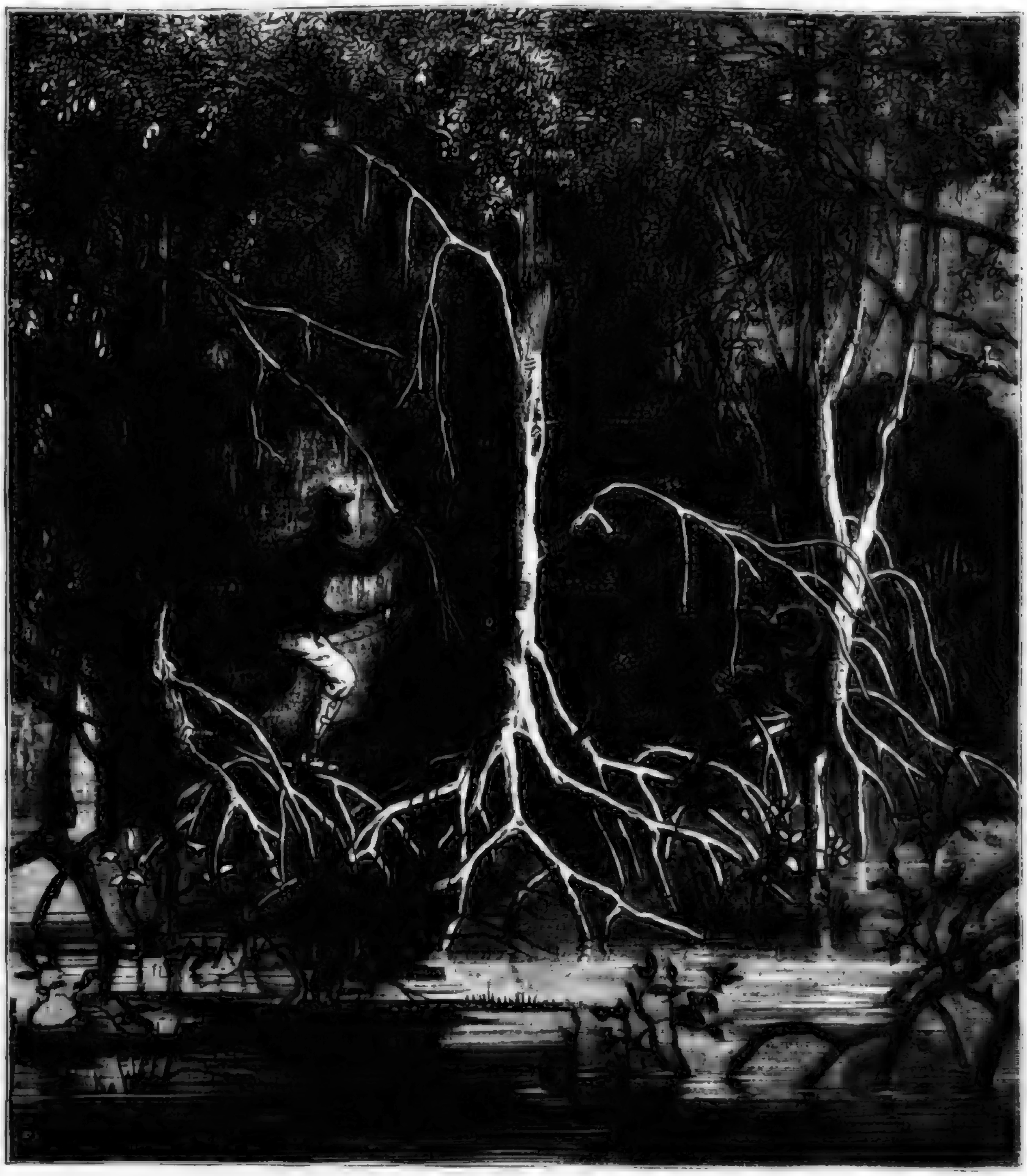
Roll, bright green waves! but do not come
With angry crests, for then
I think of mother, sick at home,
And fear lest father from your foam
Should ne'er come back again.

about him, and he had somehow felt obliged, perhaps by a blind instinct that refused to let Fate snatch her from him now, to hold her closely to the heart that plunged and throbbed for her sake.

"Yes," said Kate, sweetly, "that's so. There's nothing whatever happened to your money that *I* know; and I think you'll have to make the best of it. If it really is an embarrassment, I can help you spend it, for papa never gives us half enough. And I think, too—I think," cried Kate, with her ringing peal of laughter again, "that I ought to have a handsome fee for making Harry Halstead an April Fool!"

AMONG THE MANGROVES.

In the tropical zone, wherever the reflux of the tide exposes a broad belt of alluvial soil, the shores of the sea, particularly along the estuaries of rivers or in the shallow lagoons, are generally found fringed with a dense vegetation of mangroves. For no plants are more admirably adapted for securing a footing on the unstable brink of the ocean—none are better formed to lead an amphibious life.



AMONG THE MANGROVES.

The growth of these salt-water-loving trees (*Rhizophora gymnorrhiza, R. Mangle*) is equally peculiar and picturesque. The seeds germinate on the branches, and, increasing to a considerable length, finally fall down into the mud, where they stick, with their sharp points buried, and soon take root. The fruits of many plants are furnished with wings, that the winds may carry them far away and propagate them from land to land; others, enveloped in hard, waterproof shalls, float on the surface of the sea, and are wafted by the currents to distant coasts; but here we have a plant, the seeds of which were destined to remain fixed on an uncertain soil, close to the parent-plant, and surely this end could not have been attained in a more beautiful manner!

As the young mangrove grows upward, pendulous roots issue from the trunk and low branches, and ultimately strike into the muddy ground, where they increase to the thickness of a man's leg: so that the whole has the appearance of a complicated series of loops and arches, from five to ten feet high, supporting the body of the tree like so many artificial stakes. It may easily be imagined what dense and inextricable thickets, what incomparable breakwaters, plants like these—through whose mazes even the light-footed Indian can only penetrate by stepping from root to root—are capable of forming.

Their influence in promoting the growth of land is very great, and in course of time they advance over the shallow borders of the ocean. Their matted roots stem the flow of the waters, and, retaining the earthy particles that sink to the bottom between them, gradually raise the level of

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the soil. As the new formation progresses, thousands of seeds begin to germinate upon its muddy foundation, thousands of cables descend, still further to consolidate it; and thus, foot by foot, year after year, the mangroves extend their empire and encroach upon the maritime domains.

The enormous deltas of many tropical rivers partly owe their immense development to the unceasing expansion of these littoral woods; and their influence should by no means be overlooked by the geologist when describing the ancient and eternal strife between the ocean and the land.

When the waters retire from under the tangled arcades of the mangroves, the black mud, which forms the congenial soil of these plants, appears teeming with a boundless variety of life. It absolutely swarms with the lower marine animals, with myriads of holothurias, annelides, sea-urchins, entomostraca, paguri and crabs, whose often brilliantly colored carapaces form a strong contrast to the black ooze in which they are seen to crawl about. Life clings even to the roots and branches bathed by the rising floods; for they are found covered with mussels, barnacles and oysters, which thus have the appearance of growing upon trees, and pass one-half of their existence under water, the other in the sultry atmosphere of a tropical shore.

This vast multitude of marine animals naturally attracts a great number of strand, lacustrine and sea birds; for it would be strange, indeed, if guests were wanting where the table is so prodigally supplied. The mangrove forests thus afford sport of great variety to the hunter whose endurance can face the laborious mode of progress he must adopt.

The red ibis, the snow-white egret, the rosy spoonbill, the tall flamingo, and an abundance of herons and other waterfowl, love to frequent the mangrove thickets, enhancing by their magnificent plumage the beauty of the scene. For, however repulsive may be the swampy ground on which these strange trees delight, yet their bright green foliage, growing in radiated tufts at the ends of the branches, and frequently bespangled with large, gayly colored flowers, affords a most pleasing spectacle.

A STRANGE CRUISE.

Chapter I.

A NOBLE-LOOKING fellow was Sol Kendrick. Not that he was handsome, exactly, but that "every inch a man" seemed to be written all over his erect and sinewy frame, as well as in the deep lines of his bearded face, and the fire of his keen, dark eyes. And yet, as he stood on the jutting pier, with the sleepy old New England town behind him, and gazed moodily out on the harbor, it was clear that Sol was gloomier just then, a good deal, than the cloudy evening that was darkening down about him. For some minutes he had preserved a grim and self-absorbed silence, but now, at last, he growled to himself:

"It isn't Pattie's fault. It can't be. If it had been, the old aristocrat wouldn't have sent her away; and yet, I think she ought not to have gone without seeing me, even to please her father. Not one word, not a good-by look, not even a scratch of a pen to tell me where she was going, so I could follow, and all because the old rascal has heaped up more dollars than he knows what to do with—while I haven't. Gold, gold—that's what's the matter; and I haven't much yet, that's a fact. Well, seeing Pattie's gone in such a way, I might as well go, too. I won't try whaling again; but if I owned such a craft as that, now, I'd go with her somewhere. Never saw such a beauty in my life. Tom Avery got her wonderfully low, too; but I wonder what he means to do with her? He's a strange fellow."

"Hullo, Sol!" broke in a deep and ringing voice, close beside him. "Looking at my boat, are you? Well, what do you think of her?"

"Is that you, Tom?" replied Sol. "Well, I think she's as trim a craft as ever floated, and I was wondering how you came to get her so cheap."

"Easy enough," said Tom. "She was built for a yacht, and so big that not a dozen men in the county would care to run her for that. Then she was sold to Uncle Sam, and when the war was over, he had no use for her. So she went at auction; and, as the merchants wouldn't bid, I got her for a song. More fools they, or else they never examined her."

"Why so?" asked Sol.

"Why? Because she's as swift as a bird, carries an awful spread of canvas, and'll take more cargo than any other vessel I ever saw of her size," replied Tom.

"Why, what does she rate?" asked Sol.

"Only six hundred and fifty tons, and it's a mystery to me how they keep her down to that."

"Well, Tom, but that isn't half the mystery your voyage is. You know your own affairs as well as any man need to, but where's your profit to come from? Somebody said you were going to carry a lot of arms and such things to China."

"And so I am," said Tom, "and bring back such a cargo as suits me. I didn't drift about that old China seas whaling-ground for two years without learning something; and I'm off now within three days, if I can fix two things."

"And what are they?" asked Sol.

"Well, first, I want a mate—such a one as you would be if you would go; and I'd ask you, if it wasn't for Pattie North."

"Never mind Pattie North!" exclaimed Sol, with a long breath, and evidently a tremendous effort—"never mind her. I'll go with you."

"You'll go?" almost shouted Tom. "Then there's only one thing more."

"And what's that?" asked Sol.

"Why, it's about ten thousand dollars to finish paying our outfit. The men are all engaged to go on shares, like a whaling-voyage, and some of them have put in a good deal; but I need about ten thousand more."

"All right," coolly responded Sol. "I've got that much, and more, too, if it's needed. Do you want it to-night?"

"Hurrah!" shouted Tom—"hurrah for the *Loiterer*, and hurrah for the cruise! This is the best thing yet. You're the man of all the world I'd choose to back me on such a voyage as this. Sol, old fellow, give me your hand."

The two men were as near alike as might be in external proportions, either of them standing more than six feet; but Tom's brown hair, blue eyes and laughing face contrasted strongly with his friend's darker and sterner physiognomy.

"Come on, Sol," said Tom—"come with me, and be introduced to the men."

A brief walk brought them to the door of a weather-beaten tavern, near the docks, well known as a sailors' resort; and once inside, Sol could scarcely suppress an exclamation of astonishment.

The dingy old barroom was brilliantly lighted up, and seemed almost crowded with rugged and stalwart forms, among whom Sol recognized some of the best and hardiest seamen of the port.

"What! all these?" he whispered to Tom.

"Yes—all these," replied Tom; and then he added, in a louder voice: "Now, men, I'd introduce Sol Kendrick, the mate of our ship, if most of you didn't know him as well as I do."

This brief announcement was welcomed by a chorus of approving shouts, which increased when Tom continued:

"And, my men, Sol comes in on the same terms with the rest of us. He puts in the ten thousand we needed to complete our payments."

"Is it as much of a mystery to them, Tom, as it is to me?" asked Sol.

"Every bit," said Tom, in an undertone; "and I must keep it so for a while. In fact, part of it is a mystery to all of us, except one man."

"And who is he?" asked Sol.

"I'll tell you. Hullo, there he comes, now, the old pig-tailed mandarin. How are you, Ah Wing?"

The door near them had opened as Tom was speaking, and admitted the silent, gliding steps and the somewhat bowed figure of an elderly looking Chinaman, almost the only trace of whose nationality was in his yellow face and Tartar eyes, for his pigtail was of the shortest, and his dress that of a sailor in luck.

"Me velly good," he replied, with a ghastly grin on his wrinkled face. "How do?"

"All right now, Ah Wing—I've got my man, and he's got the money. We shall sail now in short order."

"Velly good," sententiously replied Ah Wing; but Sol Kendrick almost shuddered as he grasped the limp, cold, clammy hand that was extended to him.

The men had evidently been called together for business, and an hour or so was spent in signing of articles, giving of orders and the like; but, to Sol's astonishment, not a question was asked by any one as to the purpose or direction of the proposed voyage; and nearly thirty men, three times the crew Sol could see any use for, made up the *Loiterer's* list.

It was a curious affair, and Sol already began to feel his veins tightening with a burning interest that he had never felt before at the beginning of any venture.

"Tom," he muttered, "it only needs a lady in the case to make it out a genuine romance."

"Hush! perhaps there is," whispered Tom. "Or, rather, perhaps there may be. How about Pattie?"

Sol was silent; but he noticed a strange flush rising on his friend's face, and he had no more to say just then.

Late, however, when the assembly broke up, and Sol turned his steps toward his humble and lonely home, his thoughts began once more to trouble him, and the question came back repeatedly:

"How about Pattie?"

With a slow and doubtful motion he had laid his hands on the gate, when suddenly a sort of shadow seemed to arise on the other side of it, and a piping voice exclaimed:

"Oh, Massa Kendrick, I'se so berry glad you come! I's gittin' skeered, I is, an' I wants to get out ob dis. Dere's something Miss Pattie tole me to gib into your own hands."

Sol had been almost startled at first, but he had instantly recognized old Squire North's colored waiter-boy, and he seized with avidity the little white packet held out to him, while the bearer was made glad with a bit of crisp green paper, that caused him give a whoop and turn a somersault as he scurried away into the darkness.

Sol was inside the house quickly enough; but it seemed to him an age before he could strike a light.

Even when he had done so, his strong, bronzed fingers trembled as he tore open the envelope, and a mist arose before his eyes as he read.

It was but a brief word; yet Sol's heart bounded tremendously as he gathered in its meaning:

> "Oh, Sol, I'm so sorry, but, indeed, I cannot help myself! We are going to Europe, I believe, but they make almost a prisoner of me. Never mind, Sol, dear, how long it is; I'll come back to you some day, and we must wait. Good-by—good-by—they are coming. You will wait for me? I *will* come back! Oh, good-by!
> PATTIE."

Sol Kendrick gave almost a groan of delight as he pressed the little paper to his heart.

"Come back!" he exclaimed. "She will come back! And so will I. Wait for her? A hundred years, if need be. But why not follow her? Oh, if it wasn't for this cruise of the *Loiterer!* And yet, I see—that is all right. I ought not to follow and give her trouble. I'll be better able to bear it if I'm only busy about something. Now, I don't care a cent where Tom and his Chinaman take me. We shall surely be home again in due time. Oh, Pattie, my own little darling! If I only could see you, or send you word of where I am going! but then, as for that, I haven't the least idea myself. Good-by, then, and hurrah for the *Loiterer's* cruise!"

CHAPTER II.

If Sol Kendrick, that evening, instead of going to bed, as he did, after a while, could have sunk right down through the earth beneath him until he came out on the other side, he might, if he had been well aimed, have made his appearance in front of a well-built and very civilized-looking house in the English quarter of Hong-Kong, that queer trading-station which has grown into a city more European than Chinese.

He could not well have looked through the closed blinds, however, nor heard the lively conversation that was going forward between a young lady and her father. Neither would it have been right for him to have done so.

The young lady was of about the middle size, almost a brunette in style, but with an unusual beauty of form and face. The latter, too, was just now lighted up with pleasure and excitement.

"Oh, father!" she exclaimed, "is it true? Have you, indeed, decided to go home? I'm so glad! But when shall we set out, and how shall we go?"

"Why, Elsie, my dear," replied the dignified and almost pompous-looking old merchant, as he looked fondly down into her sparkling eyes, "my old American partner, Mr. North, wrote me by the last mail that he had closed up everything for me there very satisfactorily, and meant now to spend the next Summer in Europe. I have nearly settled the business here; I am as rich as I have any care to be, and I'd like to get back once more to civilization, for your sake as well as for my own."

"But when shall we go?"

"I can't say precisely, but before a great while. I'm going in my own ship, and shall take a good cargo with me. No other passengers, except, of course, Joe Brace, and we'll have things all our own way."

"I hate Joe Brace!" exclaimed Elsie.

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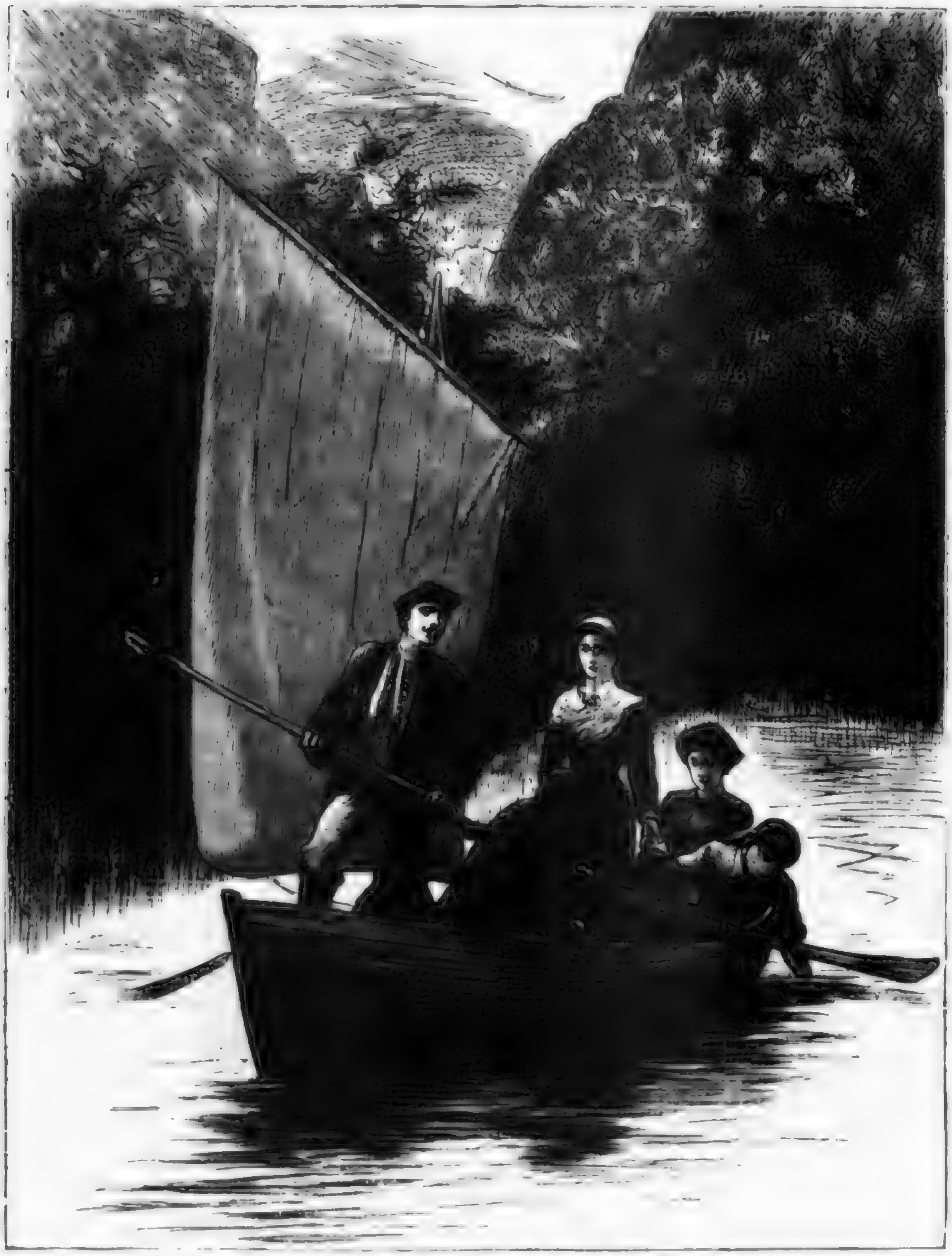


THE BONNIE BRIG O' BALGOWNIE.—SEE POEM ON PAGE 59.

"But, my dear, you know I don't want you to hate Joe Brace, but quite the contrary. What have you against him, pray? Is he not young and rich and good-looking? And I'm sure you used to like his father and mother."

"Well, yes, I liked them well enough," said Elsie, but with a cloudy look deepening on her face; "but I hate all the men I've seen here, not excepting the official people. They're a greedy, money-getting, uninteresting lot, all of them. They don't seem manly. Why, I believe the manliest fellow I've seen was the Yankee sailor that fished me up out of the water the day the *Electra's* boat was upset by that miserable junk."

"Well, yes, Elsie, he was a fine fellow, and he saved your life, it's true; but, then, you know, a mere master of a whaler—no gentleman."

"Yes, he was a gentleman, too, for he blushed like a girl when you spoke of rewarding him, and he was thoroughly polite and well-bred."

"Elsie, my daughter, he saved your life, and I don't blame you for thinking well of him; but it seems to me he did accept of a very considerable reward, after all. When I was young I'd have fished for girls all day at the rate he was paid."

"Oh, you mean my diamond ring? Well, what else could I do? And then, what good was that to him? Sailors don't wear diamond-rings, and, of course, he wouldn't sell it."

"Why not? That's the best use he could make of it," said her father.

"So Joe Brace said, and the stranger heard him say it, too, and I saw his eyes flash fire at the insult. No, father, he was a gentleman, and he would not sell it. I don't care if I do say it right out plainly—I want to get back into a country where such men grow. We've read all about the war in America, and there must be plenty of such men among such a people. I don't even care to stay too long in Europe."

"For fear of missing your man, or for fear they'll all be gone?" half-laughingly replied the old gentleman.

It was clear enough that Elsie Winwood was a spoilt child, but her pompous father had a will of his own, fond as he was, and he was now more than ever determined that Joe Brace, whoever he might be, should be their fellow-traveler, and that other things, perhaps, should result in the not too far distant future.

The conference between father and daughter was not prolonged much further, and the latter was soon left to her own devices.

For a few minutes after Mr. Winwood's departure Elsie sat in a sort of brown study, but at last she sprang to her feet, exclaiming:

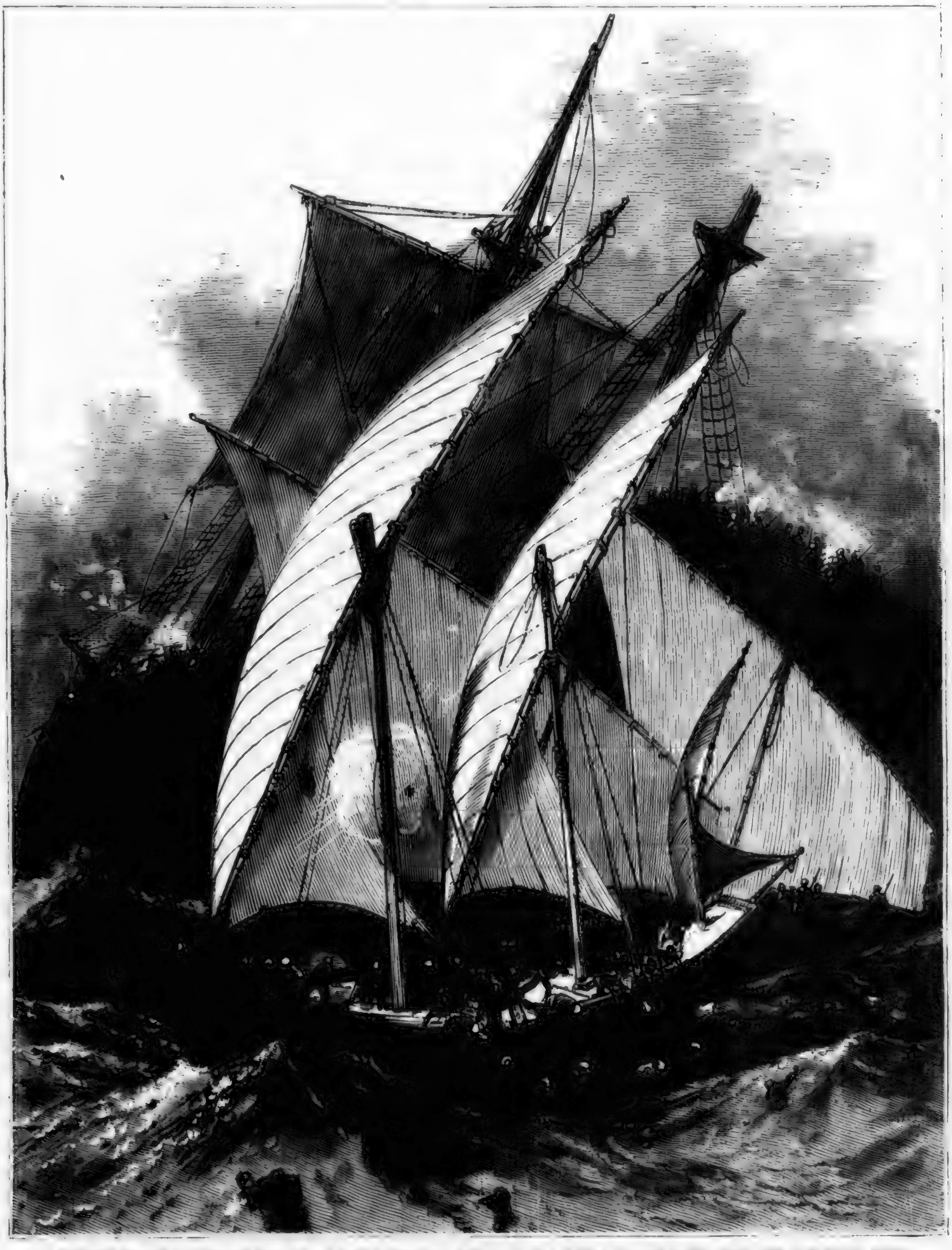
"Joe Brace, indeed! Why, he worships gold too much ever to worship any woman. There must be men in the world somewhere, and if I can't find a full-grown man, heart and soul, I won't put up with half a one. I don't propose to divide any man's affections with his pocketbook. When it begins that way the pocketbook is sure to win in the long run, and be sole master."

Elsie's face, as she saw it in the tall mirror by the window, was wearing an unusually deep color as she spoke, and she ended her soliloquy with a hearty fit of silvery, half-mocking, laughter.

Meantime the old merchant had climbed into a neat-looking, English-made brougham that was waiting at the door, and been whirled away to his counting-house.

A dingy old affair it was, but there were few signs of anything like "going out of business" about it, for, although the faded sign of "Winwood, Brace & Co." was so soon to give place to some other, everything about the concern bespoke the most bustling activity.

"Ah, Brace, my boy, is that you? Well, what's the news?" asked Mr. Winwood of a spruce, dapper-looking, sleek-faced young gentleman, who sat on a high stool in the office, as if waiting his arrival.



A STRANGE CRUISE.—"AROUND HER, AT NO GREAT DISTANCE, HOVERED, LIKE HAWKS AROUND THEIR PREY, THE LOW-BUILT, SWIFT-MOVING FORMS OF HALF-A-DOZEN PROAS, OR MALAY PIRATE CRAFT, CROWDED WITH MEN."—SEE PAGE 46.

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"Good news, good news, sir!" briskly returned Brace. "The *Golden Empire* has been signaled off the mouth of the river, and she'll be up on the tide. All safe, sir, and we couldn't ask a better ship to sail home in."

"That's a fact," said the old gentleman; "but there's no hurry, you know. I mean to make this the best cargo I ever put on board, and we must take our time to it."

"All right, sir," replied Brace; "all right. We mustn't lose sight of the profit and loss account. I never mean to be any poorer than I am now, not if I know myself."

"You'll do—you'll do!" chuckled the old gentleman. "And you must try and arrange some other things before the voyage is over.

"Trust me for that, sir; I know what I'm about," replied Brace, with a most self-confident smirk. "I think I understand some things as well as others. All I want is opportunity. Leave the rest to me."

"Well, my boy, you have my good wishes," said Mr. Winwood; "and I'm half inclined to believe you are right about it."

"Right? Of course I am. And now let's go to business."

CHAPTER III.

THE *Loiterer* must have been, indeed, very nearly ready for sea at the time she secured her "mate"; for on the morning of the fourth day thereafter she sailed gracefully out of the harbor, and turned her sharp prow toward the open sea, leaving behind her a community half-crazed with curiosity as to what great secret of commercial adventure lay concealed under the simple, "For Canton, China, and a market," that appeared on the custom-house books.

As for those on board, whatever their doubts or desires, they as yet said very little about them, nor was it until the shore was fading behind them into a dim, cloudy bank on the horizon, that Captain Tom Avery mustered all hands forward, and thus addressed them, after a few preliminary remarks complimentary to the ship and her crew:

"And now, boys, you needn't think I'd have fitted out such a craft as this, and triple manned her in this way, unless there was some good reason for it."

"Trust you for that!" shouted one of the men. "We believe it."

"I know you do," continued Tom; "but now there's one thing more I want to say. I believe this voyage of ours will pay, and pay heavy, and be a short one for the distance; but it may be as chock-full of danger as an egg is of meat; and if there's any man here don't like that, I want him to say so now, so we can take this chance of sending him home by the first inbound vessel we speak."

"You told us all that before," said one of the men. "Scarcely any one on us believed them guns and things was put on board for merchandise."

"Why not?" asked Tom.

"Wall," replied the sailor, "thar may be too many for the size of the ship, and then they was brought in one lot; but thar ain't enough of them for cargo. We kind o' reckoned as how we might have a chance to use 'em."

"Well, then, I can promise you that if we do, it will be only in self-defense, and all according to law, and I'm glad not a man of you calls out to be sent ashore. So, now we are all at sea, and the secret can't leak out, I'll tell you this much: we're bound on a wrecking voyage, and we've got a dead sure thing."

A rousing hurrah greeted this announcement, so entirely in accord with the adventurous and romantic spirit of seafaring men; but not a few of them grumbled to one another:

"He might have told us more about the place he's bound for;" and others had replied:

"Guess the captain knows what he's about. That old Chinee of his ain't any sort of a fool, now, I tell ye."

And now the *Loiterer* was made to show forth the remarkable qualities of her model and make to the very uttermost. With so strong a crew there was no need of any waste, and every puff of wind was made to tell, and every available inch of canvas was kept aloft.

Even in gales that would have threatened destruction to lighter spars, a "spread" was maintained that would have been dangerous enough for any craft less stanch and seaworthy.

Over the tossing waters, like some huge, wide-winged bird, and ever, as the swift vessel dashed onward, the enthusiastic expectations of her officers and crew grew daily more confident and exulting.

Tom Avery and Sol Kendrick were inseparable, when not divided by the necessities of duty; and the second and third mates were prime seamen, whom they had no fear of trusting with any matters pertaining to the management of the ship.

The latter was all the more easily handled because of her schooner rig, and a more comfortable craft to sail in it would have been hard to find.

They had already been some weeks at sea, when, one morning as the two friends met just after the second mate had relieved Sol of his watch on deck, Tom said to the latter:

"Sol, my boy, we've made the most wonderful time on record. At this rate we shall be on our working ground a good half sooner than I'd any idea of. It wouldn't do a bit of hurt to overhaul our cargo and make sure it's in good condition."

"I don't see how much of it could have been damaged," said Sol; "but we might as well take a look at the diving-gear. A little airing would do that no harm. Old Ah Wing has got over his sea-sickness at last, and it wouldn't be a bad idea to give him anything to do. I never saw a man so long in getting on his sea-legs; and yet, all the while, he insists on telling you it's 'velly good.' He's a curious old fellow."

"He's all of that," said Tom; "and, if he does get seasick, I've very little fear of his ever getting homesick."

"Ah!—why not?" asked Sol.

"I fancy," replied Tom, "that he would rather not show his ugly mug to any Imperial Mandarin. The way I got him was in saving his life by hiding him on board my ship when the Emperor's 'braves' were after him. I don't know what he did, or what he didn't do, but I'm pretty sure they meant to chop his rusty old head off if they caught him. It may have been some political affair, for he was a man of consequence. At all events, he seems to know the Chinese coast better than any other man I ever saw, as well as all the adjacent seas and islands. He laughs outright at some of our charts, I can tell you."

"I fancy some of them are a little to leeward of correct," said Sol, "and that may account for the fact that so many of our merchant vessels don't get home. There's a terribly long list of them that were never heard of after they left port."

"There may be other reasons besides bad maps, or even tornadoes or sunken rocks," gravely responded the young captain.

"What do you mean?" asked Sol.

"What do I mean?" said Tom. "Why, I mean that there are great patches of these Eastern seas that ought to be colored blood-red on the charts. Were you ever caught in the Malay Archipelago?"

"No, never," said Sol; "and, what's more, I don't want to be."

"Don't you be too sure about that," said Tom. "Some of those little groups of islands have a good deal about them that's interesting."

"I understand you," said Sol. "You mean, as everybody knows, that they swarm with the worst pirates the world ever saw, and yet that we are going right in among them."

"Well, maybe so," calmly replied the captain; "but if it were so, would you hesitate about it?"

"In a common merchant-ship, yes, I would," said Sol, "for I don't want my throat cut; but in such a swift concern as this, with such a crew, and armed as, I suppose, we shall be, the danger seems pretty much gone."

"Don't you believe that!" exclaimed Tom. "We'll be safer than almost any other craft, except a man-of-war; but we'll be in awful danger, nevertheless, and whatever we do will have to be done like lightning."

"Are they so numerous as that?"

"Yes, and thus our errand is a peculiar one. Even European armed vessels would stop us, and the Chinese Government craft, too, if they ran down so far. I'm about sure that any British gunboat would interfere promptly enough. None of our men have had a chance to let out anything, however, and I guess we are safe on that score; only we must keep on full sail, and not let any one overhaul us after we get into those seas. We might be arrested for pirates ourselves."

From that time forward there were curious scenes to be witnessed on board the *Loiterer*. Every day the secret recesses of the hold were called upon to yield up some fresh treasure of odd, uncouth-looking machinery, or some warlike munition of cannon and small-arms, on which the busy crew employed their spare time, putting each and all into the best possible condition for the work ahead.

Nor was there among them all a more industrious, thoughtful, enthusiastic workman than the taciturn, gloomy-faced old refugee Chinaman, for Ah Wing complained no more of sea-sickness.

CHAPTER IV.

NOT many days' sail above the more defined limits of what is known as the Malay Archipelago, and really part of the same formation, there is a low-lying cluster of wooded islands. None of them are large, and some are quite small, but, covered as they are with luxuriant tropical vegetation, and smiling with perpetual Summer, they seem made for the very abode and home of peace, security and happy indolence.

It is a most deceptive appearance, for amid the difficult and dangerous navigation of the surrounding seas gathers the destructive might of the cyclone—that storm of unequaled terror. On the islands themselves arise the half-ruined temples of a dark and cruel idolatry; around the deserted shrines of a faith only more barbarous than their own gather the treacherous, pitiless representatives of a race to whom piracy, pillage and wanton massacre are but pleasant recreations; while in and out of the narrow and tortuous channels between the rocky shores glide the slightly built but swift-sailing proas, that have been for generations the nightmares of the India and China trade. On the rocky reefs, moreover, bleach and rot the timbers of many a gallant ship, and whiten the scattered bones of their crews and passengers.

An awful place for civilized men to visit of their own accord, and yet, one sunny afternoon, as the shadows of the islands were beginning to stretch themselves further and further toward the east, a cloudy white speck on the horizon grew rapidly larger and larger, until it took the shape of the broad sails of a schooner of more than usual size, and swept swiftly on, as if toward some well-known harbor.

Not another sail was in sight, and the schooner kept on her course, as if steered by a pilot to whom every landmark and channel were perfectly familiar. And such was, indeed, the case, for by the side of two tall, powerfully built men who stood on the schooner's deck, an elderly, cunning-faced Chinaman, in sailor's dress, was evidently aiding them to steer their craft, while they exhibited the utmost confidence in his knowledge and skill.

It was a singular affair, that schooner. Not a man-of-war, very clearly, and yet a heavy, wide-mouthed bronze cannon, of the American navy pattern, was mounted on a pivot forward, while either broadside, whose light but strong bulwarks were pierced to match, was defended by three smaller guns, of a most serviceable appearance. The oddest feature of all was, however, that the after-cabin, which rose some four feet above the deck, seemed to have been turned into a species of citadel.

Just now every port was closed, and all the guns run in; but the schooner had, nevertheless, a very decided look of being "cleared for action," while she seemed remarkably well supplied with men.

"Tom," said one of the men, "we're within a mile of shore, and that's an ugly-looking reef off there to win'ard. Does Ah Wing say keep on? I don't understand his pigeon-English half the time."

"Light on! Light on!" exclaimed the Chinaman. "You'll see pletty soon."

Orders were now given, however, and sail after sail came in with marvelous celerity, until the headlong course of the vessel was reduced to a very moderate progression, and the man at the lead called out his soundings as they glided forward.

"Pretty shoal water, Sol," said Tom. "I'm glad we're light, and that the *Loiterer* needs so little water to float in."

"Five fathoms, Tom! We're running in pretty close for such a neighborhood."

Ah Wing now chattered rapidly in a kind of "chop-chop" that only Tom could understand, and the latter shouted to a group of expectant seamen forward:

"Have the buoy clear, and stand ready to heave the grapnel!"

The schooner was now barely drifting, with a slow, even motion, and Ah Wing was leaning over the side. Suddenly the latter lifted an arm, and Tom shouted:

"Heave! sharp, now!"

And then there was a slight plash in the water, and as the *Loiterer* glided on, a small white-painted cask rose and fell on the lazy waves in her wake, and just as the sun was setting, her sails were again hoisted to catch the fast-increasing breeze, and she sped away to seaward.

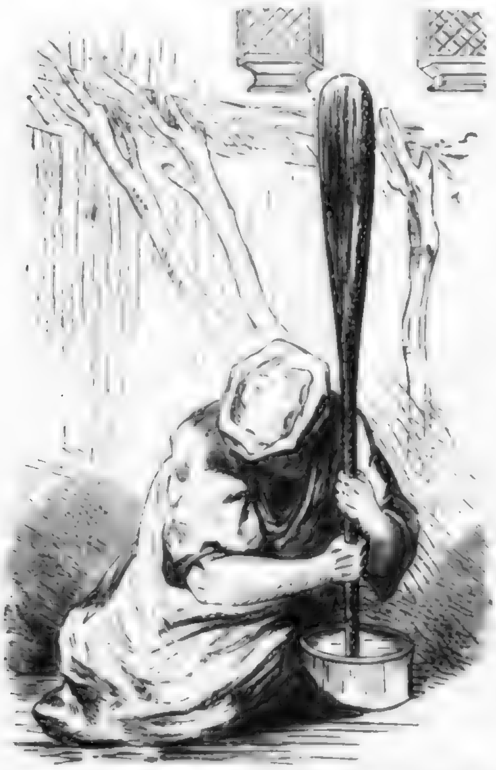
"We might almost as well have remained now," said Sol.

"Not quite," replied Tom. "We don't care to anchor there all night, and we could do very little before morning. Ha! what's that? It's a proa, as I'm alive! Well, we'll lead that fellow a jolly race, and it'll be queer if we can't throw him adrift in the dark. We mustn't use our guns, if we can help it."

XUM

"No, indeed," said Sol, "unless we want every pirate in the islands about our ears."

Whatever happened on board the *Loiterer* that short, tropical night, at all events the first rays of the rising sun the next day found her securely anchored close to the spot where the buoy had been anchored the previous morning.



TRAVELING IN THE EAST.—A COFFEE MORTAR.—SEE PAGE 55.

Not only was the schooner anchored, stem and stern, across the drift of a very obvious current, but two other light anchors, fore and aft, had been carried out in boats for over two hundred yards to leeward. The cables of these had been hauled taut, and these again had been joined by a strong hawser within fifty feet of the ship.

All this had been done before daylight, and now, one after another in quick succession, nearly a hundred tightly coopered casks were tossed overboard, and arranged, five deep, end for end, along the hawser, while the rapidity with which planks and timbers were laid on these, so as to form a strong and buoyant raft, showed how completely every preparation had been made beforehand.

On this float, round which the schooner's boats were plying, there now appeared a strange agglomeration of machinery, and any person initiated in submarine craft would have said at once, "There are divers at work."

True enough, for when the light increased, and the waves subsided, the men in the boats could see that the raft had been arranged immediately over a mass of water-logged fragments on the bottom, that still bore some rude resemblance to the sunken hull of a large ship.

Ah Wing had been wonderfully accurate!

Men like the crew of the *Loiterer* toil with terrible energy when there is danger to spur and gold for reward, and the diving machinery worked to perfection.

One after another went down, explored till he was tired, and came up again; but before the sun was two hours high, a stalwart diver, who had just regained the raft, shouted, as his uncouth helmet was unbraced:

"Tom—Tom, my boy—hurrah! I've got it!"

"Got what?" exclaimed half-a-dozen voices.

"Slow and careful, now, on that windlass!" was the reply. "You'll see in two minutes."

It was not so easy to be prudent, but Tom and Sol steadied the haste of their men, and the time seemed long enough, although the weight on the crane was none of the lightest.

"I freed it of the timbers, and there's no danger of losing it," said Sol; and just then the barnacled, rusty outline of a small iron-bound box came slowly to the surface of the water.

"Steady, now—swing her in!" shouted Tom, and in a moment more the box was on the raft.

"There's no doubt of what's in it," said Sol; "but I move we open it right here, to encourage the men."

"All right," said the captain; and all the strength of the casket was a trifle against the brawny arms that plied sledge and lever on its fastenings.

"Dollars!—Mexican dollars!" shouted Tom Avery. "How's that, Ah Wing?"

"Velly good—velly good," coolly replied the Chinaman. "Gold better."

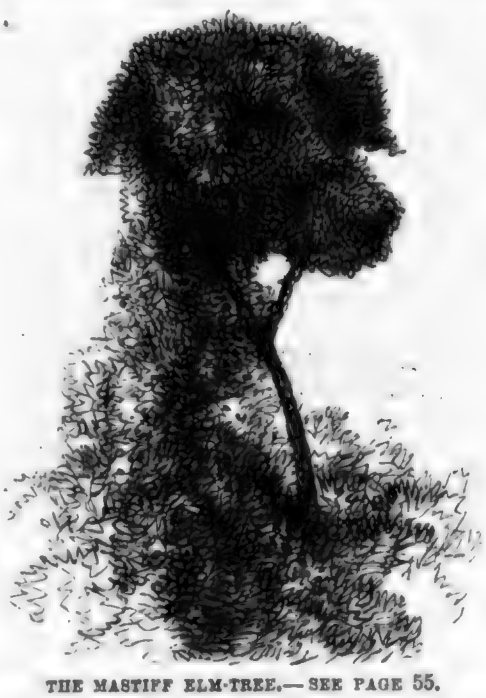
There needed now no further stimulus, for Sol had found the treasure storeroom of the old Indiaman, and box after box was brought surging up, and carefully transferred to the deck of the *Loiterer*.

It had been more than one generation since the underwriters of London had paid the losses on that forgotten wreck; but Chinese tradition and official record had kept the secret of her fate incomparably better.

Noon came, and still the divers disappeared and searched and came up again, though now it seemed as if their prizes were nearly if not quite exhausted, while more than one suspicious-looking craft began to appear here and there in the offing.

"This won't do," said Tom. "The men are all getting dead beat, and we shall have a hornets' nest about our ears if we wait an hour longer. I wonder they're not upon us before this. Hullo! what's that? Sol, just look at that cloud! Hurrah, men! Tumble the machinery into the boats! All hands on board! Quick, now!"

Tom Avery had cruised in those seas before, but his precautions were taken none too soon. Even with so strong a crew, wearied as they were, by the time the anchors were up the heavens above were black with the presage of the coming tempest.



THE MASTIFF ELM-TREE.—SEE PAGE 55.

There was no time to beat to seaward for room. To anchor where they were would be sure destruction, and already the half-sunken reefs to eastward and westward were white with breakers.

Tom Avery stood on the deck of the *Loiterer* as she once more began to move through the water, leaving behind her the still fast-anchored raft, and his face was dark with anxiety, when the stealthy step of Ah Wing came gliding to his side, and a few brief words of terribly "broken China" again brought the light of hope to the eyes of the young captain.

WAITING.

Still, it required pluck and seamanship even to comply with the advice of the old Chinaman, and the sailors of the *Loiterer* needed all their confidence in their commander to obey his orders.

Not half a mile from shore the waters boiled and surged above the long, low reef, and right in behind the foaming line did Sol Kendrick steer the graceful model of the now treasure-laden schooner. Deep enough, as it is almost sure to be in such localities, but who knew where they were going?

Not they, indeed; but perhaps Ah Wing did; for less than a mile, and just as the first gust of the hurricane came howling through the rigging, brought them to a bend in the coast, outside of which a tall, rocky, forest-covered islet shut in behind it a sort of bay, or lagoon, of moderate size, but wherein no "rollers" from the open sea could come, and from which the very islet itself would keep off the fury of the storm.

All this both Tom and Sol could see at a glance, as they heard the rattle of the anchor-chains, and the *Loiterer* swung round to the wind as safe as in any harbor; but the thought also came to them both:

"What a rat-trap for the Malays to catch us in, if they only knew we were here! We could scarcely work our way out again, and our treasure would only have been gathered for the pirates."

"I wish," said Sol—"I wish I knew what old Ah Wing was grinning at."

The Chinaman evidently overheard him, for all his wrinkles promptly subsided to their usual ugliness; but Tom replied:

"I think we can all grin over the result of our day's work. Just hark to the howling of that gale, and see the breakers out yonder! We were not five minutes too soon in getting in here."

Chapter V.

Like many of the sudden storms of that latitude, that which had interrupted the wrecking was but a brief one, or, what is more likely, they were only in the very edge of its course, for before morning the wind began to lull and even the sea to subside.

The men had rested well, and were ready, with the first return of light, for the orders which indicated a prompt effort to bring the *Loiterer* out of her very safe, but still very perilous, berth.

It was reasonably sure that no proa could as yet have entered the narrow passage behind the reef; but, even as the schooner herself, with only her light duck spread, began to feel her way along the channel, the ears of her crew were saluted by a sound that sent a thrill to their very hearts.

"Could that be a gun?" said Sol.

"Ay; and there's another," answered one of the sailors. "Some craft's in trouble out yonder. 'Tain't so very far off, neither."

On went the *Loiterer*, and clearer and more clear rang out the signals of distress, if such they were. The gale had sunk to merely a stiff breeze, and the whole heavens had a "clearing-up" sort of look; but now, at last, the crew of the schooner were able to "understand the situation."

Less than a mile away, in a direct line, but further by the course they would themselves be forced to take, they could see the dismasted hull of a huge and evidently heavily laden ship, helplessly drifting onward toward the surf-crowned reef; while around her, at no great distance, hovered, like hawks around their prey, the low-built, swift-moving forms of half a dozen proas, or Malay pirate craft, crowded with men, and obviously only in doubt as to the best and safest moment for closing in.

It was not as signals of distress, in that region where no friendly ears could hear, but in a mournfully feeble and desperate effort at self-defense, that the crew of the doomed merchantman were trying to employ their few and badly aimed guns.

"Hurrah, men!" shouted Tom Avery. "All hands clear the decks for action! We must go to help that fellow. We've got to fight, anyhow, and we might as well wade right in."

The shout which answered him told how little urging his gallant sailors needed; and, as the schooner's way was quickened through the narrow channel behind the reef, every man who could be spared from the rigging was busied with the guns, or in getting out the small-arms, of which latter there was a superabundance.

The schooner's presence was evidently known to the pirates, but it was not so likely that they were aware of her powers for mischief, since they scarcely paid her movements the least attention. They had one prize sure, and were determined to stick by that for the present.

Scarcely had the *Loiterer* cleared the point of the reef and turned her head to seaward, before the luckless merchantman rose slowly on a long, driving wave that bore her forward mightily toward the shore; but that left her, as it receded, firmly wedged between a pair of outlying rocks, from which no human power could liberate her.

A chorus of savage yells and cries arose from the swarming decks of the proas, and with one accord they dashed forward toward their victim. But the *Loiterer* was nearer now, and still she showed no signs of flight, to the unmixed astonishment of the Malays.

And then there came a sharp flash and a puff of white smoke, and, as the booming report of a heavy gun came over the tossing water, a well-aimed shell struck the mainmast of the nearest proa, bursting as it struck, and scattering death and destruction over the crowded deck.

At that moment there had been an anxious assemblage on the deck of the merchantman. She was apparently weak-handed, as if she had lost a part of her force in the storm, or by the swivel-guns of the proas, but all who were left were gathered like those who have lost all hope, and await their coming doom.

"That schooner is a very large one for a Malay pirate craft," said a weather-beaten man, who seemed to be the officer in command. "I never heard of anything like it. Did you, Mr. Winwood?"

"It makes no difference," sadly replied the dignified, elderly gentleman addressed; "even the proas would be a thousand times too much for us. The world will never so much as know where the *Golden Empire* was wrecked. Oh, Elsie! my daughter—my darling! If only you could be saved!"

"Father!" suddenly exclaimed the beautiful girl toward whom the old man turned his streaming eyes—"oh, father, I don't believe it's a pirate! There!—see there!"

And even as she spoke there came the flash, the bursting shell, and the booming report of the *Loiterer's* pivot-gun.

Less than twenty men, all told; these, if the savages had boarded the wreck at once, could not have kept their ground three minutes; but again and again the pivot-gun spoke out, and, although not all the shots went home to any purpose, the Malays were evidently puzzled, and hung back. Then, as the beautiful schooner swept in among them, the broadside-guns came in play, and the *Loiterer* hove-to within speaking distance of the *Golden Empire*, while the proas, for a moment, scattered in all directions, as if in dread of what might be coming.

"Have you a boat?" shouted a voice from the schooner.

"Not one left," was the reply; but in marvelously short order two well-manned whale-boats were dashing through the water, and the survivors of the *Golden Empire* needed no urging to hasten their departure.

Old Mr. Winwood himself handed his daughter over the side, nor did he guess the cause of her sharp exclamation as she almost fell into the arms of a tall, blue-eyed, bearded seaman, who seemed to be in command of their rescuers.

"I am glad to meet you again," said Elsie, under her breath. "This is the second time."

There was little time to spare, however, for the pirates were again drawing nearer, as if stung to action by the apparent escape of their prey.

On board the *Loiterer*, Elsie and her father, and even Joe Brace, were in the cabin; but not yet were they safe. In vain the guns were plied with the energy of despair, while the swift schooner darted through the water.

The proas were as light-heeled as herself, and several more had arrived. What was it that two of them were sinking, torn almost to fragments by the bursting shells? The others were closing up, with an evident knowledge that their only prospect was in "boarding" at once.

"Get her before the wind, Sol!" shouted Tom Avery. "Give them both sides at once. There now, all hands to the cabin, and let them come on. We'll show them a thing they never saw before."

No sooner said than done; and as the yelling and triumphant savages poured over the low bulwarks, it was upon a deserted deck, whose fast-closed hatches seemed to mock their greed for blood. In vain they swarmed in a still denser throng. For a moment they were completely mystified, but only for a moment; for then half-a-dozen window-portholes in the side of the cabin toward the deck were thrown suddenly open, as many wide-mouthed howitzers, filled to the muzzle with grape and canister, were thrust venomously forth, and then——

"It's a perfect slaughter-pen, Sol," said Tom Avery.

"Yes, Tom, it's awful," said Sol. "Let's give them another, for they're climbing on the deck of the cabin."

The proas had not been grappled to the schooner, and were now drifting somewhat astern, while the dense mass over the cabin were powerless for harm, and not a live pirate remained on the deck forward, although there were plenty of dead ones.

"Now, boys!" shouted Captain Avery, "follow me! Charge!"

Not only the crew of the *Loiterer*, but of the *Golden Empire* as well, dashed out upon the deck with their brave young leader, and once again the pirates were overmatched. They fought like tigers, but breach-loading carbines and revolvers were too much for their antiquated firelocks, and after a desperate attempt to come to close quarters, the remnant cast themselves overboard, preferring the chance of being picked up by the proas to that of facing the leaden rain from the angry white men.

It was swift work, and then the big guns came in play again, and yet another proa disappeared beneath the waves, while the remainder spread their wide lateen sails, and betook themselves to swift flight among the narrow channels of the islands.

"Well, Captain Avery," reported the third mate, when there was time for a brief inspection, "there's two of our boys killed, and five wounded—none of 'em very bad; and there's one of the *Golden Empire's* men gone under, and nigh half of 'em's hurt, more or less."

Just then Mr. Winwood and Captain Graves, of the *Golden Empire*, came up to tender their gratitude to their brave rescuer, and Elsie Winwood was on her father's arm; but Tom Avery cut them short with:

"Not a word, please; we really have no time for it. Our craft is light, and you must tell us what you care most for on board the *Golden Empire*. We can't take all, but we'll load to the hatches, provided you're willing to go to a Yankee port. We can't change our voyage, you know."

"Certainly not," said Captain Graves, "and Captain Avery is right. I see he has put about, and is headed for the wreck. The pirates won't come back in a hurry, but they will surely come, sooner or later. You and I, Mr. Winwood, must take that matter in hand. Leave Miss Elsie to tell Captain Avery how grateful we are."

"Well," said Mr. Winwood, "he is only too good and kind, and I don't know what to say. Elsie, my dear——"

"Oh, father," said Elsie, "Captain Avery is an old friend of mine. Don't you remember him?"

"Old friend?" exclaimed her father, with a puzzled look. "I don't exactly comprehend—Elsie——"

"Why, father, Captain Avery is the very man who saved my life before in Hong Kong harbor; and he has *not* sold my ring, for he's wearing it now."

"It's wonderful!" exclaimed Mr. Winwood, more and more dumbfounded. "Elsie, my dear, I think I'll go and attend to the cargo. Captain Avery, I—well, I'll tell you by-and-by what I think of you."

Nevertheless, the homeward voyage was nearly half completed by the now heavily laden *Loiterer* before even Elsie or her father succeeded in telling Tom Avery *just* what they thought of him.

As for Sol Kendrick, his venture in the *Loiterer* had caused his poor ten thousand dollars to multiply remarkably, but it had brought him other help as well. When Pattie North and her father came home in the Fall to meet the Winwoods, and attend the wedding of Elsie and Tom Avery, Elsie said to Pattie:

"Tom's got a friend I must make you acquainted with. Just the most splendid, bravest, best fellow, next to my Tom, in all the world. You really must know him—Sol Kendrick."

"Oh, Elsie!" exclaimed Pattie; "*my* Sol!"

"Your Sol? Is that so? Well, we're the luckiest pair of girls! Haven't you seen him yet? Well, he's coming here to-night with Tom. Won't it be fun to have him find you here!"

And Sol did find her there, and her father had nothing more to say against "old Winwood's hero," especially considering the success of the *Loiterer's* "Strange Cruise."

THE MASTIFF ELM-TREE.

About a mile due west from the residence of David H. Shaffer, the celebrated naturalist of Cincinnati, Ohio, in the village of Mount Lookout (First Ward, Cincinnati, Ohio), is seen this remarkable elm-tree, towering above all the other trees of the surrounding forest. It represents a huge mastiff, with its front looking toward the Astronomical Observatory, and overlooking the village. The artist has not drawn on his imagination in making this sketch, but has delineated it as represented on page 52. Beyond are the misty outlines of East Walnut Hills.

TRAVELING IN THE EAST.

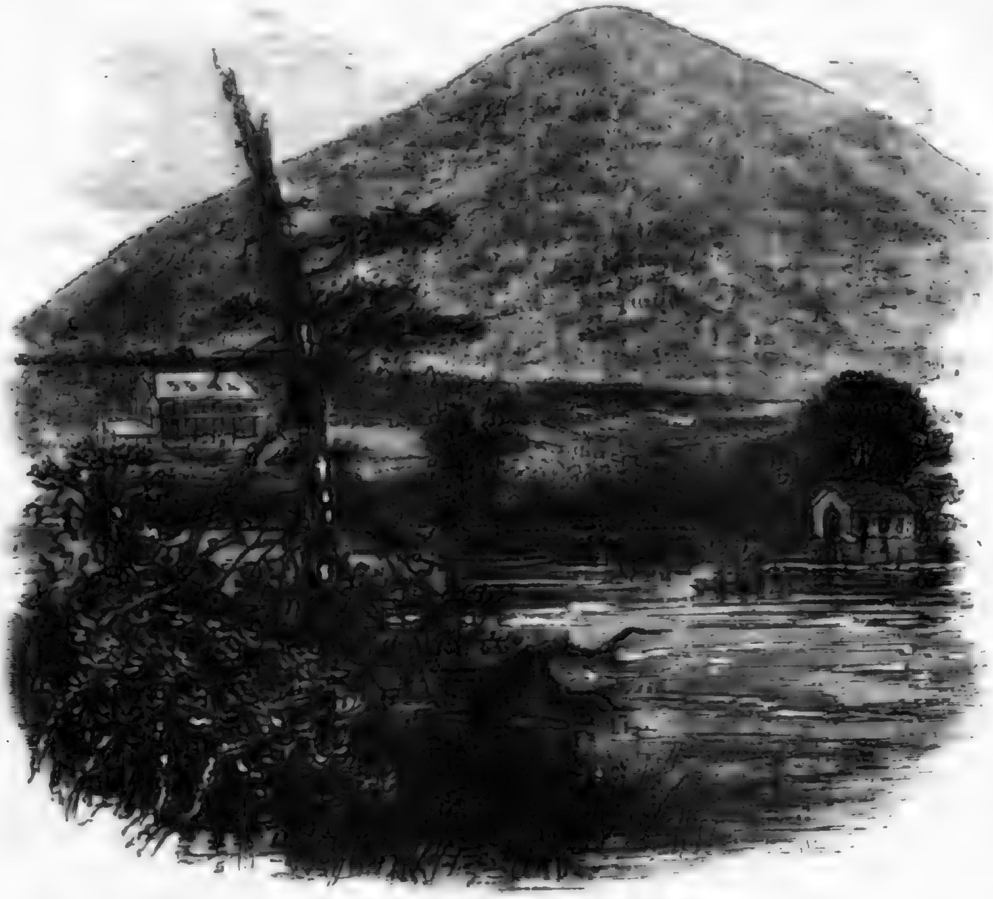
To travel with comfort or advantage, a man must conform to the practice of the country. In the first place, he ought to adopt the Eastern garb, both for its greater convenience and for health's sake.

Considerable danger arises from traveling during the heat of the day and not having the body, and especially the head, sufficiently covered. The horses and mules cannot travel at a rapid pace; the body is not kept in sufficient motion to excite perspiration, and the skin becomes dry and burning hot, the pulse full and quick, and fever is very apt to supervene.

The body ought to be covered with as much additional clothing as in the coldest weather, and the head enveloped in shawls, in order to keep up a constant moisture on the skin.

Tight-fitting European garments, moreover, with their straps, and buttons, and braces, are sore incumbrances in a country where men sit down on the lap of mother earth, with their heels tucked under them, and where they lie down to sleep at night without undressing. The thick folds of the turban are likewise invaluable as a protection

XUM



BALD KNOB AND THE ONLY LAKE IN VIRGINIA.

against the direct rays of the sun, not to mention that they often save the unwary stranger from a broken pate. Both the outer and inner doors of the houses in many towns, particularly Jerusalem, are so low that newcomers from Frankistan frequently give themselves violent blows on the head in their forgetfulness of the necessity of stooping.

LITTLE STONY CREEK.

Again, the Orientals have, from the remotest time, been a wayfaring people; traveling is their education, their science, and they have deduced from it the art of dispensing with many things—an art which the European stranger among them will find it much to his advantage to study. Their baggage is contrived in the simplest and most portable form. That of a man who wishes to be completely provided, consists of a carpet, a mattress, a blanket, two saucepans, with lids fitting one into the other; two dishes, two plates, and a coffee-pot, all of copper, well tinned; a small wooden box for salt and pepper; six coffee-cups, without handles, in a leather box; a round leather table, which he suspends from the saddle of his horse—it has a running-string round the edge, by which it can be converted into a very serviceable bag; small leather bottles or bags for oil, melted butter, water, and brandy (if the traveler be a Christian), a pipe, a tinder-box, a cocoanut cup, some rice, dried raisins, dates, Cyprus cheese, and, above all, tobacco and coffee-berries, with a roaster and a wooden mortar, with a long handle of a peculiar shape, to pound and triturate the coffee into an impalpable powder.

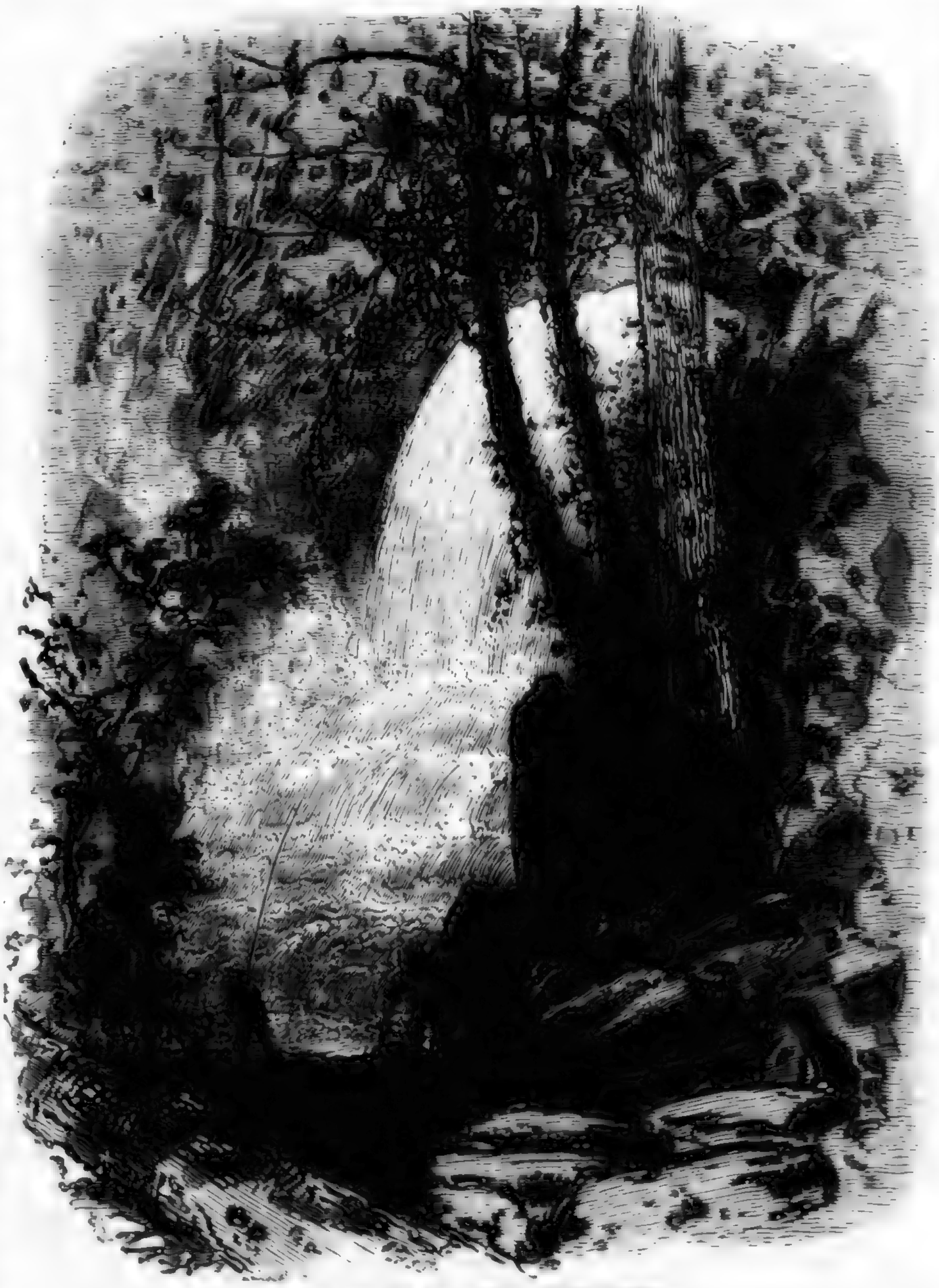
It is astonishing what effect the smallest portion of the strong coffee made by the Arabs has; no greater stimulus is required in the longest and most arduous journeys. It is universal throughout the East, but more used by the Arabs of the desert than by any other class; they will often go without food for twenty-four hours, if they can but have recourse to the little dram of coffee, which, from the small compass in which they carry the apparatus, and the readiness with which it is made, they can always command. Its strengthening and exhilarating effects far exceed those it is possible for a dram of spirits to have on persons who indulge in strong liquors.

To the above list a tent may be added, or not, as circumstances may require. In the region of Lebanon, one may always so adjust his movements as to find shelter for the night in a village or in a khàn; but a man is certainly more independent who carries his house about with him, and under its cover he is at least safe from the bedfellows that murder sleep within the walls of almost every fixed habitation.

Among the articles most useful in an encampment, and which are not procurable in Europe, the Turkish portable lantern must not be forgotten. It gives a most agreeable light, is convenient to carry from tent to tent, or in the streets at night, and would afterward serve as a very ornamental light for any small space in a dwelling-house.

BALD KNOB AND THE ONLY LAKE IN VIRGINIA.

Twenty years ago a well-graded, well-kept stage-road connected the Sulphur Springs in Montgomery County with the ever-famous Greenbrier White Sulphur Springs of West Virginia. Over this highway hundreds of tourists in quest of the cool shades and sulphurous waters of the "Springs" were conveyed by a regular line of stages through scenes of beauty and grandeur unexcelled by any which the historic State of Virginia can elsewhere present.



THE CASCADE ON LITTLE STONY CREEK.

Forty miles from the White Sulphur, and on the sloping summits of the Alleghanies, these stages, as they whirled out of the dense forest from the north, came suddenly in view of a beautiful lake nestling under the shadow of "Bald Knob."

That Virginia, which is so utterly destitute of isolated bodies of water, should have this single instance of a lake which she can really call her own, without infringing on the claims of another State, is not less curious than that this one should be located as it is, away up four thousand feet above sea-level. Mountain Lake nestles composedly in between its mighty barriers, finding the only outlet for its waters on the north, where a depression in the ridge permits the overflow from two square miles of surface to plunge with a rapid descent into the valley below. The forest extends down to the water's edge, where the laurel and rhododendron reflect their plumed foliage in the placid lake. Clear as crystal and cold as a mountain spring, the silvery sheet of water seems to fit into its bed as though it had never known another resting-place.

For a long period of years the lake remained in a wild and desolate condition. Giant trees protruded above the level of the water, their leafless branches a perch for the halcyon and the eagle. Salt Pond, as it was called, presented but a sorry aspect, and had few attractions for the venturesome lover of natural scenery. The location on the highway, the rich qualities of the soil, and the many points of interest in the immediate neighborhood, induced a company of gentlemen, some twenty-five years ago, to put up a small hotel at the southern end of the lake, and to offer the accommodations of a mountain tavern and whatever attractions the woods and streams in the vicinity possessed for those who might be induced to stop over on their way to and from the more celebrated watering-places. The inducements for stopping over were not sufficiently great to tempt any very large number of travelers, and the enterprise proved a complete failure.

Not long after this the property was turned over to some prominent Virginians, who built a large hotel, erected bowling alleys and stakes, cleared up considerable land, and with some attempt at improving the appearance of the lake and its surroundings, made quite a pretty and desirable place of resort. Salt Pond reached, in a short time, the meridian of its glory; the stages left their daily load of guests at the house, and the place assumed that air so peculiar to all the fashionable watering-places of Virginia, when the war of the Rebellion put a sudden check to its career.

The deserted house gave shelter to a wandering band of outlaws, who, in turn, made way for the home guard, between whom and the desperadoes many a bloody struggle ensued. It was along the old road that General McCook, after his raid into this part of the country, beat a hasty retreat to West Virginia, with the enemy behind him in hot pursuit, and to-day there lies buried in the unknown depths of the lake—at least, so goes the report—a fabulous quantity of stores and ammunition, which the retreating army abandoned.

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After the close of the war the hotel stood for several years surrounded by that appearance of desolation in which it was left by the contending armies. With an energy and skill which has accomplished some of the greatest feats of engineering in our land, the present owner of this historic spot instituted a series of reforms which soon transformed the house and place to a condition which before it had never known. The water in the lake was raised several feet by means of an artificial dam in the outlet, roads were cut, out-buildings went up, and stables, bowling-alleys and a billiard-room rose from the ruins of those burned during the war. The name Salt Pond, with its historical and traditional associations, was discarded, and the more elegant and expressive title of Mountain Lake formally adopted.

The most expeditious way of reaching the lake is by stage from Christiansburg, distant only about two dozen miles. The first town through which the road passes after leaving the railroad is Blacksburg. The stop for dinner is made at Newport, a typical Virginia town, situated in the bottom of the deepest valley that its original settlers could possibly find. A few minutes will suffice to inspect this ancient and venerable burgh of a single street, to catch flying notes of some animated discussion going on at the store, where the chances are that you will be immediately waited upon by a committee, and requested to deliver a political oration at the approaching mass-meeting, and then to peep in at the old carding-mill, whose immense wheel and noisy clapper furnish almost the only evidence of vitality in the town.

To go to Mountain Lake and not explore one of the caves on Sinking Creek would be as unpardonable as to spend a month in Plymouth and not stand on that sole remaining fragment of the "stern and rock-bound coast" sacred to the memory of the Pilgrims. Of these caves—three in number—one has been explored to the depth of over two miles, and some partially successful attempts have been made to follow out its numberless ramifications, with their gorgeous galleries rich in artistic columns and fantastic stalactitic formations. The caves are regarded with superstitious dread by the natives of the surrounding mountains, their mysterious depths being seldom penetrated, save by the stranger; and no wonder that some fantastic stories regarding them should be current, since they were once the retreat for a company of silent and busy laborers. Magnesium wire, ignited in the great dome of the principal one, lights up the remains of fourteen vats, or hoppers, in various stages of decay, and here in this subterranean laboratory the soil of the cave was leached in the process of extracting from it the nitre to be used in the manufacture of gunpowder for the Confederates during the war. The entrance to this subterranean cavern is on the hillside, a few yards from Sinking Creek—a short distance from where its waters are lost in the earth.

The exploration of the cave is as much as one cares to essay in one day. And taking this as a fair specimen of the curiosities which you are likely to meet with underground, you will be better repaid by leaving the others unvisited and joining a company of ladies arrayed in bloomer costume, and gentlemen in knee-boots and blue shirts, who are going to the Cascade.

Of all the picturesque spots around the mountain home, there is none to compare in grandeur with this. The fall is accessible only on foot, by a path which leads from the road for a distance of half a mile, crossing and recrossing the creek on temporary foot-bridges consisting of felled trees, and terminating in a long flight of rude steps formed of flat stones, the descent of which brings one to the bottom of a deep amphitheatre, worn out by the action of the torrent through countless ages. Over a shelving ledge at one end of this cavernous basin, Little Stony Creek pours its waters with a noise of thunder, sending up, as it plunges into the surging pool below, a cloud of spray which envelops the descending column in a misty shroud.

From the Cascade a "blaze" leads for, it may be, two miles to an open oak and chestnut portion of the forest. Here and there an auger-hole in a great boat, polished by the deer in their attempts to get at the salt, marks the location of a "lick"; and a few yards away, up in the branches of an oak, is a rude seat, where, night and morning, a lonely hunter strains his ear to catch the sound of the gentle footfalls of his victim. If you creep softly here you may surprise a flock of wild turkeys scudding away down the slope, until the slow flapping of their wings gives notice that, unless one has been detained to digest a load of double "b's," you may as well cease to reflect further on the habits of the American turkey and his sudden and unceremonious manner of leave-taking. On a little further, and a surprise is in store. Without any indication of a valley being near, the land comes suddenly to an end. In the dark a man would step over a perpendicular precipice four hundred feet high, there being absolutely nothing to give warning that the level ground on which he walks is the brink of such a terrible abyss. These are Barney's Rocks, and unfortunately have no other romance connected with them than that one Barney, charmed by the giddy height, chose a spot in their immediate vicinity for the location of his cabin; and though man and hut have both passed away this many a year, the place still bears his name. No one can leave this fascinating spot before having rolled over the edge a stone and counting the seconds, one, two, three, four, five, six, ere it is dashed to powder on the rocks below.

The few settlers, better known as "Yahos," whose rude cabins are scattered at rare intervals through this wild region, are as low in the social scale as any class of beings of their race in existence. Nothing short of a personal history of each individual would convey an adequate idea of the varieties of character which one occasionally encounters creeping noiselessly through the woods in search of game, or of some one's chickens, as the case may be. The only trait common to all is an utter lack of thrift. Improvident as cannibals, these semi-barbarous, untutored backwoodsmen manage to live on a hand-to-mouth system which in time of scarcity of game is exceedingly precarious. The women, barefooted and careless of their personal appearance, are distinguished from the sterner sex only by the short and tattered garments which they wear, for in other respects their habits are strongly masculine. Tobacco-chewing is regarded as an accomplishment rather than as a repulsive vice; the use of language coarse and vulgar in the extreme is tolerated by their code of etiquette, exhibiting either a woeful ignorance or a hopeless state of immorality.

Thanks to the indefatigable energy of the lady of the manor, the social and moral condition of these people are becoming rapidly improved; but, on the principle that "it is hard to teach an old dog new tricks," the labor of reform is directed not so much against the adults—for they can grow no worse, at all events, and it is doubtful whether their condition can be much bettered—as to the improvement of their children, who are taught the art of sewing, together with various other useful accomplishments, and a Sunday-school is held for their benefit in one of the hotels, which, in rain or shine, the children come from miles around to attend.

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The Summer passes before you are aware of it in the mountains, and you are fortunate if you can so allot your time as to have an opportunity of spending a few weeks on a tour of inspection from one place of resort to another. The Greenbrier, Montgomery, New River, White, and a dozen other "Springs" of notoriety, will afford an abundance of entertainment to those fond of travel and recreation; or should your taste for "roughing it" lead you to the woods, you will find more than one hunter's cabin at your disposal, where you are not likely to be molested by visitors, unless it be in the shape of an occasional flea.

THE BONNIE BRIG O' BALGOWNIE.

On, brightly shone the sunbeams,
With many a dancing ray,
On the swiftly rushing river,
That ran into the bay,
At the bonnie brig o' Balgownie,
That happy Summer day.

And lightly rang our laughter,
Resounding far and wide;
While we filled our arms with flowers,
Bright blooming at the side
Of the bonnie brig o' Balgownie,
As we floated down the tide.

Our boat moved down the river
With its fair and happy crew,
Who, laughing, splashed the water
Their oars went rippling through—
Ne'er could the brig o' Balgownie
A bonnier picture view.

Till, wearying of our boating—
A merry band were we—
Along the beach we wandered
Where the Don flows madly free,
Beneath the brig o' Balgownie,
Down to the dancing sea.

To some of us the sunshine
Was changed to brightest gold;
And we wondered while we listened
How oft, in days of old,
The staid old brig o' Balgownie
Had heard the story told.

We would not mark how swiftly
The happy moments sped;
But by the beach we lingered
Till the Summer sunlight fled,
And behind the brig o' Balgownie
The moon came up instead.

Then homeward by the river
We wandered as before;
Each sighing, 'mid our singing,
That these happy days were o'er,
And the bonnie brig o' Balgownie
Might hear our songs no more.

For Autumn suns shine coldly,
And past is Summer's ray;
The bluebells, too, are withered,
Our friends are far away—
So the bonnie brig o' Balgownie
Stands silent, cold and gray.

"AS WOMAN'S LOVE."

It was snowing hard when Birdie Allen ran in to see me that afternoon. I was sitting all alone over the wood fire; and of all human beings walking the length and breadth of the world that minute, Birdie was the one I'd have hidden away from most gladly if I could. Her little, quick, firm step in the hall sent angry shivers through my nerves; her fresh, sweet voice grated over my heart, as it had done last night, when I heard it through the other voices, through the music, haunting and following me everywhere, while I talked to other women and men, and she talked to Archie Kershaw.

Birdie was very quiet this afternoon. She sat and stared into the wood fire, and twisted one glove round and round—she would not take off the other—and seemed so dreamily satisfied with her own thoughts, that I wondered why she had run through the snowstorm to sit with me and think them. At last she spoke, suddenly—so suddenly that it made me start.

"Nell, do you think that Archie's a flirt?"

"Do I think so? I—I don't know. I suppose they call him so."

"Oh, I know he has flirted outrageously!" she says, smiling on in the calmest content. "I mean, do you think that he's fickle and unreliable and—and all that sort of thing, you know? Do you believe that he's only a flirt, and nothing more?"

"No."

I was dropping all the stitches in my crochet-work, but Birdie couldn't see that. She didn't even see the fire, I think, though she was staring into it so hard.

"Archie says you know him better than any other girl in Lakeside."

"Does he?"

"I wonder that Archie never fell in love with you, Nell!"

She looked at me then, and I met her eyes and laughed.

"I don't consider it a matter for surprise, by any means."

"Well, I do. You are exactly the sort of girl he ought to like!" she says, dreamily; "you are one of the nice, reliable, good people, with character and sense and earnestness; and I'm awfully silly, I know. I think it's very strange——"

"Oh, Birdie! Birdie! there was no need to break off there! Why don't you take off your glove, Birdie?"

She started up and walked across the room for something—or nothing. She came up behind my chair, pulling off the glove as she did so, and stretched her hand over my shoulder.

Birdie had never worn a ring before, but there, on her first finger, tied with a bit of narrow ribbon to hold it on, was the great seal ring that I used to see on Archie Kershaw's big brown hand.

"Well, why don't you say something?" she cried, laughing, very much as though she were about to cry presently; "why don't you say you're surprised?"

"I'm not surprised. Don't I know Archie better than any other girl in Lakeside?" I say, smiling as I look up at her; "and do you suppose I didn't know what he wanted? And what Archie wants he always gets."

"Does he?" She slips down on the floor and leans her

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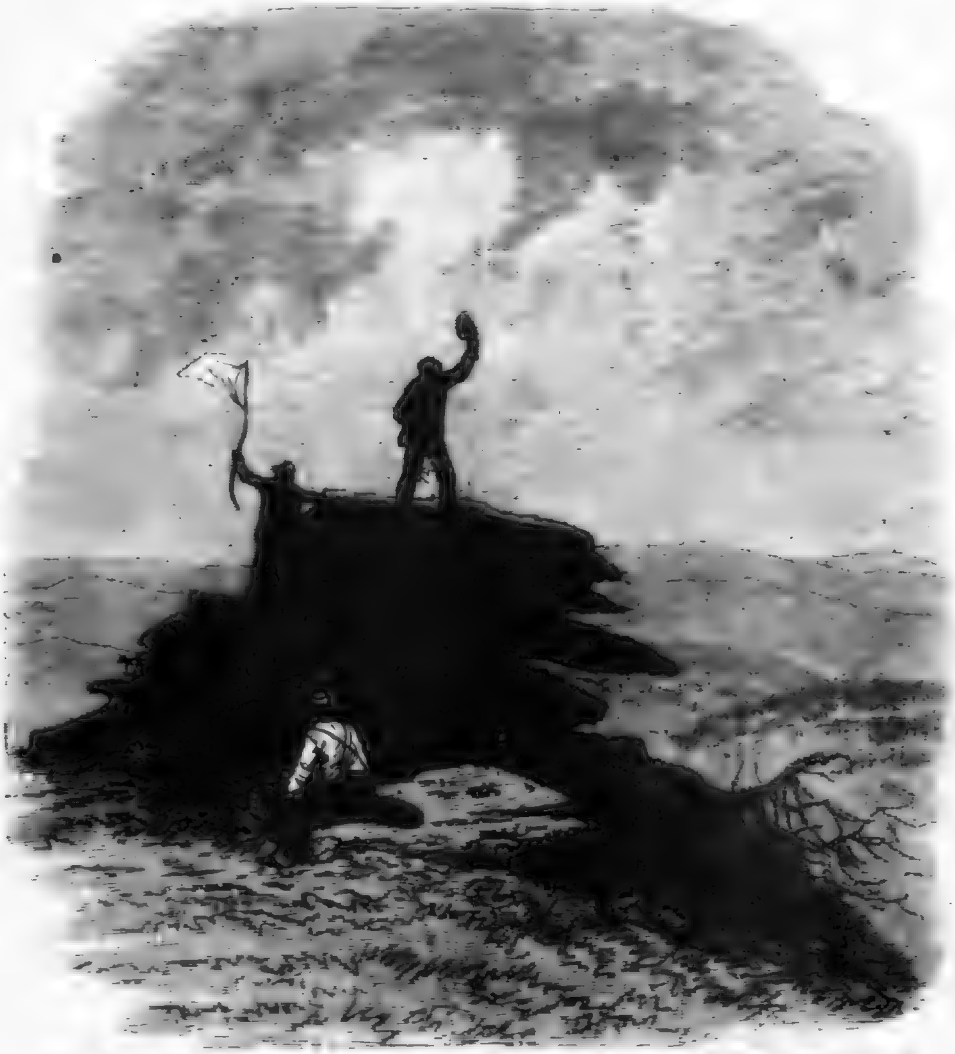


BALD KNOB AND THE ONLY LAKE IN VIRGINIA.—SUMMIT OF BALD KNOB.—SEE PAGE 57.

elbows on my lap, and her face on her clasped hands, so that her lips touch his ring. "I wish — oh, Nelly, I'm awfully afraid of mother! I don't believe she will like it! I don't believe she likes Archie at all! She said last night that she wished he was back on the plains again, and that made me so angry! I wish he wasn't a soldier. All my life I shall never know one single minute's peace when he's out of my sight, and he'll have to go in two weeks now."

How could I tell her that I wished those two weeks were annihilated, and the very hour of Archie's going at hand already? How could I tell her that every word she uttered was driving me mad? Her very touch was so hateful to me that my flesh crept as if a snake were sliding over it. I never knew of what stern stuff I was made until that day, when I sat smiling with Birdie's head upon my knees, and saw her kissing Archie's ring with the lips that had last kissed him.

Well, I need not write of all her idle talk that filled the afternoon, and made every hour of it a lifetime of patience and endurance. It was over by-and-by. She went away, and kissed me as she went. And she looked up in my face, with her hands on my shoulders, considering me for a minute.

"If he had——"

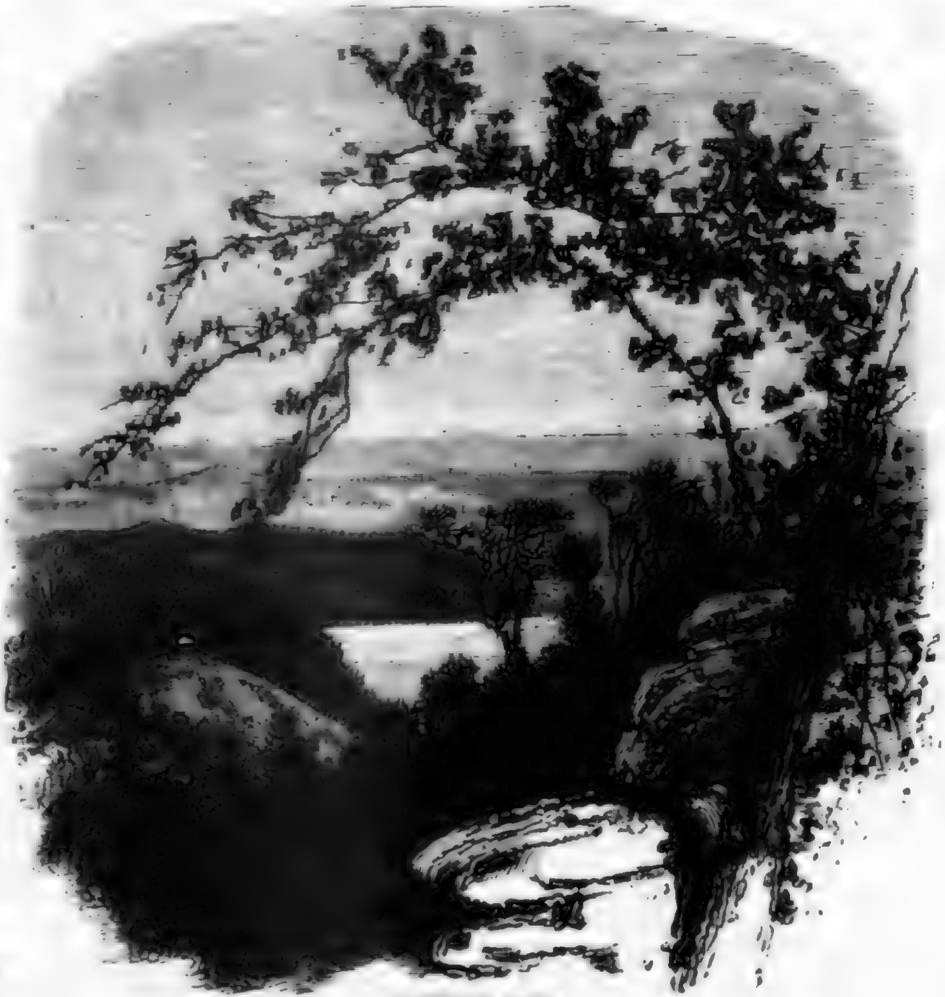
"What?" I asked, as she stopped and laughed at herself.

"Loved you!" she said; "if he had loved you I should—have—killed you! There!"

And she dropped her hands and ran away, but for all her laughing I saw her brown eyes flash. Birdie was not quite a child—not she!

And so they were engaged! Archie Kershaw's six weeks' furlough had ended in this! Captain Kershaw, fresh from fighting Indians on the plains, had looked into that pair of laughing brown eyes and loved them at first sight, and the brown eyes, looking back, had known their master, and it was done! Four little weeks for the wooing and winning! Four little weeks to show Archie his "one fair woman" out of all the world! It was four years since I had known him first, but not in four times as many could I ever have taught him that lesson.

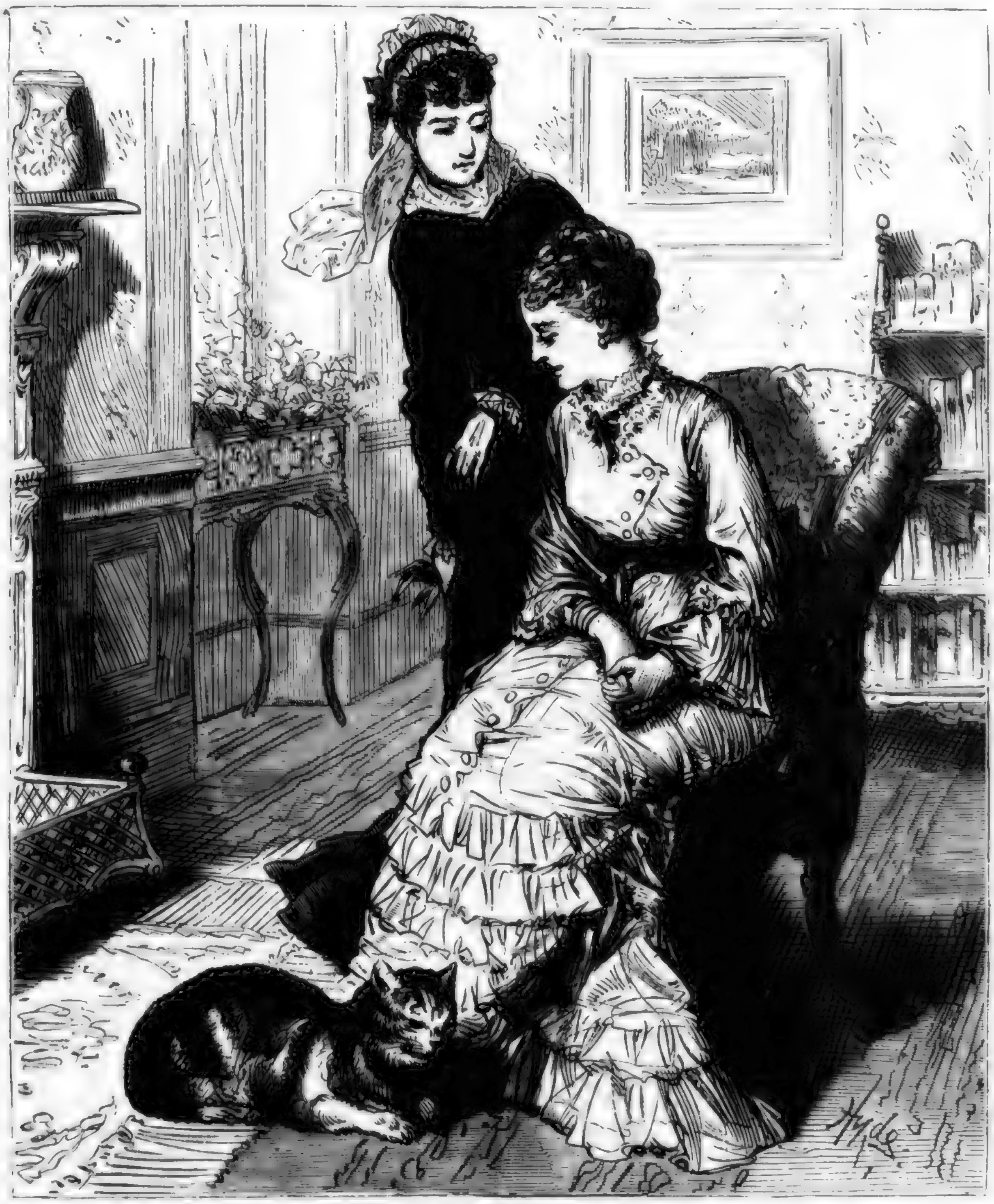
There was a good deal of the



MOUNTAIN LAKE.

boy in Captain Kershaw, and, exactly like a boy, he was always pouring his joys or his troubles into some female lap for approbation or sympathy. I knew, when Birdie ran home that snowy day, leaving her secret behind her in my keeping, that Archie would not be long in following her example. On the fourth day he walked in, looking as little like an exultant lover as man might look.

"You know—Birdie told me you knew all about it, Nell, and of course I was awfully glad she had told you!"



"AS WOMAN'S LOVE."—"BIRDIE HAD NEVER WORN A RING BEFORE; BUT THERE, ON HER FIRST FINGER, TIED WITH A BIT OF NARROW RIBBON TO HOLD IT ON, WAS THE GREAT SEAL RING THAT I USED TO SEE ON ARCHIE'S BIG BROWN HAND."—SEE PAGE 59.

So he begins, looking down, rather shyly, as he twists his long mustache with the hand that carries a ring no longer. And I answer a quiet "Yes," without ever raising my eyes to look at him.

"I know you're very fond of her," he goes on, hurriedly, "and you're just the best friend to me that a man could have. I don't believe there ever was a fellow who had such kind, true women for his friends as I. And—well, in short—it's all up—that's all."

And he stands on his feet and stares down at me, with this abrupt and exhaustive summary of the matter.

"All up?" I repeat, blankly.

"Of course, I never intend to give her up as long as I live—never!" he says, rapidly, beginning to walk the room. "Of course she knows that, and I told her mother so; but, in short, Mrs. Allen doesn't like me, and never did like me, and she won't hear of an engagement. And I'm not to see Birdie any more, and—Nelly, if I was the sort of fellow to give up and go to the devil, I'd have started on the hardest gallop last night that ever took a man to that region."

"Oh, Archie, it can't be so bad as you think."

"I don't know. I don't believe it can be meant that I'm to do without her; and, Nell," his voice has a little pitiful quiver in it here, "it's half broken her heart, poor little thing. That's the worst of it all. I could bear it myself; I could bear anything that came to me alone, but

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I can't bear her trouble. I've been half mad since I saw her last night. I gave her mother my word that I'd never write to her, or—or try to see her again, without her consent; and God knows if I shall ever get that!"

"Why isn't she willing?" I ask, under my breath. I am so glad—oh, so glad, that he never cares to look my way, not even once, as he walks the room with those long, quick strides.

"Oh, for a thousand and one reasons," he answered, recklessly. "Because I'm a soldier, and a poor one at that, and with no chance of quick promotion, and I've no better home to give her than some beggarly outpost, and I know what a miserable future that is, as well and better than any woman can."

My face sank down between my hands. I had no word to say to him. He did not miss it—he went on talking in a wild, hurried fashion, as he paced up and down, and never heeded me at all.

"I'll wait ten years for her—twenty. I'll never try to shake her duty or influence her; I've given my word, and I'll keep it, but I will have her in the end. I'd wait a lifetime for the sake of calling her my wife with my last dying breath; holding her just one minute——"

"Does Birdie know you're come to tell me?" I break in, incoherently. I cannot let him run on longer.

He answers in a hopeless sort of fashion, flinging himself down in a chair, and leaning his head down in his two hands.

"Yes—I don't know—I suppose she does. I'm upset to-day, Nell; I'm fit for nothing at all. I ought not to have come here, and that's the truth; but somehow I—I wanted to talk to somebody; you don't mind me, do you?"

"I do mind you; I'm sorry. I wish I could help you, Archie, but I don't see how I can do even the least thing——"

"You can't," he says, bitterly.

And then we both fall into a silence, he with his face in his two hands, I watching him with a great mist before my eyes.

Then this thing happened: The door opened, opened quick and softly, too, so that he never heard it, and a little figure stood on the threshold, with a white, piteous face, and eyes that gave a startled flash when they caught sight of him.

She raised one finger to silence me, she hesitated one second, holding her breath, I believe, and then, like a noiseless, wind-swept shadow, she flitted across the room, and quick, quicker than I can tell it, was on her knees by Archie's side. And before he could raise his head in the wonder of it, she had clasped her arms round it, and drawn it to her breast, and had kissed his curls once, twice, in a wild, hurried way, with never a word, and then springing to her feet, had darted away out of the room as swift as a bird flies. And Archie, springing up, too, only looked at me.

Just once, and that once only, I saw tears in his blue eyes, but the passion in them almost scorched up the dew. Then he was out of the room like a mad man, if not after her, at least anywhere away from the sight of another creature.

The fortnight wore away, and the last day came; he bade me good-by on a gray wintry afternoon, and we stood in the old sitting-room, holding each other's hand and looking into each other's eyes as we said our last words.

"I want to write to you, Nell," he said, hurriedly. "I—I—for God's sake, Nelly, let me hear about her. I shall go mad out there alone if I don't get some word; let me write to you, and, if you don't mind, won't you show her my letters? And tell me what she does, and how she is, and—and—you know I'm a jealous fool," he stammers out, with a great blush spreading over his sun-browned face—"you'll tell me everything, good or bad, won't you? I wouldn't ask it of you, Nelly, if I wasn't sure you were the best friend in the world to both of us."

And I promised him all he asked or wanted, with no reservation on my lips or in my heart.

"God bless you; you're a dear girl, Nell."

He had my two hands in his, and the quick, warm strain of his clasp almost crushed them—I can feel it yet. And there was a dizzy, hurried glance into the blue depths of those fair, sweet eyes, and a dream of saying "good-by," and Archie was gone. If I had known!

And then came speeding from the West those letters that were not for me, though they bore my name upon their covers. They were written in snatches from camp, sometimes a pencil scribbling, jotted down on the very march; they were full of vivid little sketches of that wild, perilous life—pictures of plain, and valley, and mountain pass; stories of skirmish, and pursuit, and danger, and adventure, and something more—something that other eyes than mine used to read with tears in them, and read over and over again; little scraps that were sometimes torn off the sheet and carried away, laid next to a warm, quick-beating little heart.

And the answers that hurried back—well, they were what he had most desired, no more.

They told him all he cared to know; they were full of one girl's life, and that was not mine.

Sometimes I craved, God knows how passionately, to pour out just a little of my own heart's fullness to him; sometimes the very words slipped from my pen—bits of my own individual story, my own thoughts, my own restless feelings; but those letters never went—ah, no! I was to "tell him about Birdie," that was all; and I told him no more, accordingly.

And one by one the weeks slid along Time's string; the year slipped away, and another one came in, and Archie and I wrote on, with little change at first in the tone of those sweet, sweet "love letters" and their grave answers.

But at last I began to tell him how Birdie was not so well as she used to be, not quite so bright; how I was afraid that she worried about him, and how nervous she was growing, and restless; and how, out of this shadow of fear, I thought some hope for him was springing. And one day there was a little message from Birdie herself, the first one.

"Tell Archie that mother asked me to-day where he was, and whether I ever heard from him."

I knew that "mother" was giving way when the little girl told me that, with her brown eyes shining, and the old-time smile dimpling round her mouth already.

I was almost as sure of it then as I was three weeks later, when a wild scrap of a letter came from Kansas—a scrawl that covered twenty lines only, to say that Mrs. Allen had written to him, and——

Well, he was the happiest fellow in creation—he was the luckiest—he adored Mrs. Allen from the bottom of his heart, and he believed he loved all the world that minute, and he had just written to his darling little girl, and couldn't say any more, except that he was "sincerely and gratefully, Archie."

And the "darling little girl," with a thick letter next her heart, instead of a poor scrap of paper torn away, came running to tell the story over to "dear Nell"; to tell me how mother was so kind, and Archie and she were so happy now, and how she supposed——

I should have been happy too, should I not? I used to

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say to myself that I would have died to give him his heart's desire, and I could do no less than thank God, surely, when another hand helped him to the blessing.

I thanked God for his sake; but it was enough for me to be thankful, was it not? He could not require that I should be glad.

There were no more letters from the West for me. They came, but I never read them now; only once in a while somebody else remembered to give me a message.

"Archie sends his love to Nell, and says he's an ungrateful fellow not to write, but she understands how it is, doesn't she? And really his letters must have been a tremendous bore."

Birdie was very busy now; she was working all day long on muslin and embroideries, and dainty little suits—not too gay, for they were to be worn out on the frontier. You would have thought that she could scarcely find time to answer those letters, and yet every other day she walked to the post-office to slip in a voluminous package. And in spite of sewing like a little workwoman, she grew rosy and round again surprisingly fast; there was a motive now for her to improve and grow strong, for she must "look like herself" by the end of May, when Captain Kershaw was to take a furlough and spend a week at Lakeside, and when he went back again was to carry with him such a very large share of the sunshine that brightened the Allen house.

She was so happy, and she loved him so—I am sure she loved him. She had no misgivings or fears. I know she never shrank from the thought of hardship or danger, or the lonely life away in that wild, unsettled country.

As the time came nearer I think she was only more and more glad in a deeper, quieter way, and she used to come and sit with me in the late afternoon, and talk, not so much of herself as of him, and of what she hoped their life would be; it was such a comfort to talk to me, she said, because I was fond of him.

Birdie's pretty labors were nearly finished; the last day's work upon the wedding fineries had come, and it chanced for me to drop in when the last "trying on" was in process, and Birdie stood, laughing and redder than any rose, in the midst of a cloud of snow-white tulle, admired by half-a-dozen women.

"Isn't it sweet?" "Doesn't she look like a picture?" "How do you like it, Nell?" asks Archie's little girl, turning her dancing brown eyes on me and smiling under her misty vail. "The loopings will come here, you know—apple-blossoms and lilies-of-the-valley," explains an officious handmaiden, from her knees; "and this will be caught up with a spray—so——"

The hall-door slams, and shakes the house.

"There's Tom with the mail!" cries the little white statue, posing as if for a flight. "Oh, run, somebody, and get my letter! Mother, run and ask him, won't you?"

Tom's shrill boy's voice sounds in the hall:

"Where's mother? I say, there's been a fight! Where's Birdie?" And then somebody stops him, wildly—just one breath too late. For he has time to finish his shouted sentence, and we all have ears to hear it: "And Captain Kershaw's killed!"

"Archie's little girl!" never in this world! Never, never, never!

She heard it all—every word! She would hear it, and we had neither heart nor power to keep it from her—all the meagre, heart-sickening story of the fight. "Only a skirmish," they called it, but brief and hot as it was, it left only dead men lying along the swell of the gray divide, and among the dead lay Archie, my love—her lover! Archie, whose fair face no eyes should ever linger over more, whose bonny brown curls no little hand should touch—not even the kind earth cover.

She saw it in the dark and in the sunshine, everywhere—that horror! I held her in my arms all that night, and she cried and moaned that it would not leave her—that she could not remember him alive; she only saw him dead—a dreadful thing for the cruel, broad sun to shine upon.

"I shall always see it just the same till I die! Oh, I wish they had not told it! I wish I were dead! Oh, Archie, Archie! why won't you come and take me?"

So, all that long night, and many and many a night and day to come. And it was always I who sat by her bed. She would have no one else.

"Nelly cared for him," and so it was Nelly's hand she held, and Nelly's breast that she cried on. For she could cry. "The gift of tears," was given her, when my eyes were as dry as my heart, and that "lay in me as an ash in the fire."

Do you think my story should end here? End, perhaps, with a green grave in June, and a bridal vail folded over a white little face that no more tears can disfigure? I draw the curtain before Birdie's sick-bed, and shut out from you her bitter moanings, her passion of outpoured grief and love, and all the world-old utterance of a woman's broken heart. How soon it heals again, that wonderful epitome of all strength and weakness! When I push the curtain aside once more, Birdie's little heart has a scar two years old, and you could scarcely see the place where it was wounded so sorely one blossomy May day.

* * * * * * *

"Is that you, Nell?"

I walk into Birdie's own room, and see her start and thrust out of sight in her workbox something that she was staring at very eagerly when I first opened the door. Birdie wears a pink ribbon in her black braids this Summer, and her old "half-mourning" dresses are brightened up with gay little knots here and there. And I half think, but I've never said it to myself before—— I put the thought out of sight as I kiss her, and will not grant it a place at all.

I wonder why the brown eyes are so shy of mine this morning! There she sits, spoiling a bit of braided cloth with unsteady little fingers, and pricking herself with the needle twenty times.

She talks to me in an odd, fitful way, with her thoughts a thousand miles distant, I should think. And I glance around the room, puzzled for a minute over something! The room, surely, as well as Birdie, is unlike itself!

"Why, where——"

Her eyes follow mine to a vacant place on the wall.

"I—I took it down," she stammers; and then she lets the work drop suddenly. "Nelly, I suppose you haven't a bit of respect left for me, have you?"

My eyes turn from the vacant space to meet hers, with the thought—that is a full-grown knowledge now—rising clear and distinct between us.

"Nell!"

She slips down on her knees by me and hides her face in my lap.

"Nell, don't you remember? I—I—used to wonder why Archie didn't fall in love with you! I wonder—I think—you cared a great deal for him, didn't you? I think it would have been so much better—for him—if he had!"

"And for you, Birdie?"

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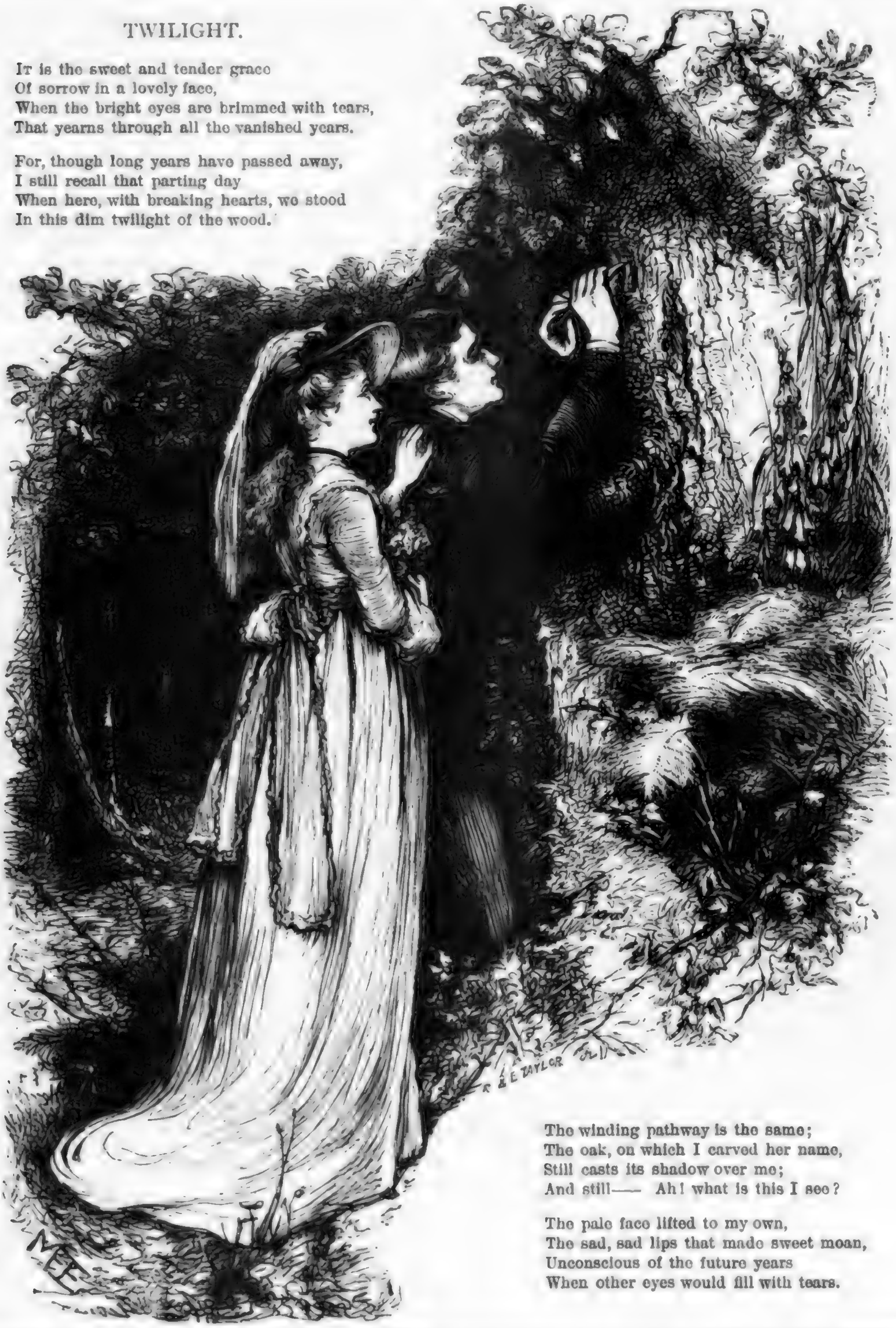
TWILIGHT.

It is the sweet and tender grace
Of sorrow in a lovely face,
When the bright eyes are brimmed with tears,
That yearns through all the vanished years.

For, though long years have passed away,
I still recall that parting day
When here, with breaking hearts, we stood
In this dim twilight of the wood.



The winding pathway is the same;
The oak, on which I carved her name,
Still casts its shadow over me;
And still—— Ah! what is this I see?

The pale face lifted to my own,
The sad, sad lips that made sweet moan,
Unconscious of the future years
When other eyes would fill with tears.

"I—oh, I always said I was silly! I—you know half the girls in Lakeside say that I'm engaged," she hurries out, laughing, nervously, "and tease me about him!"

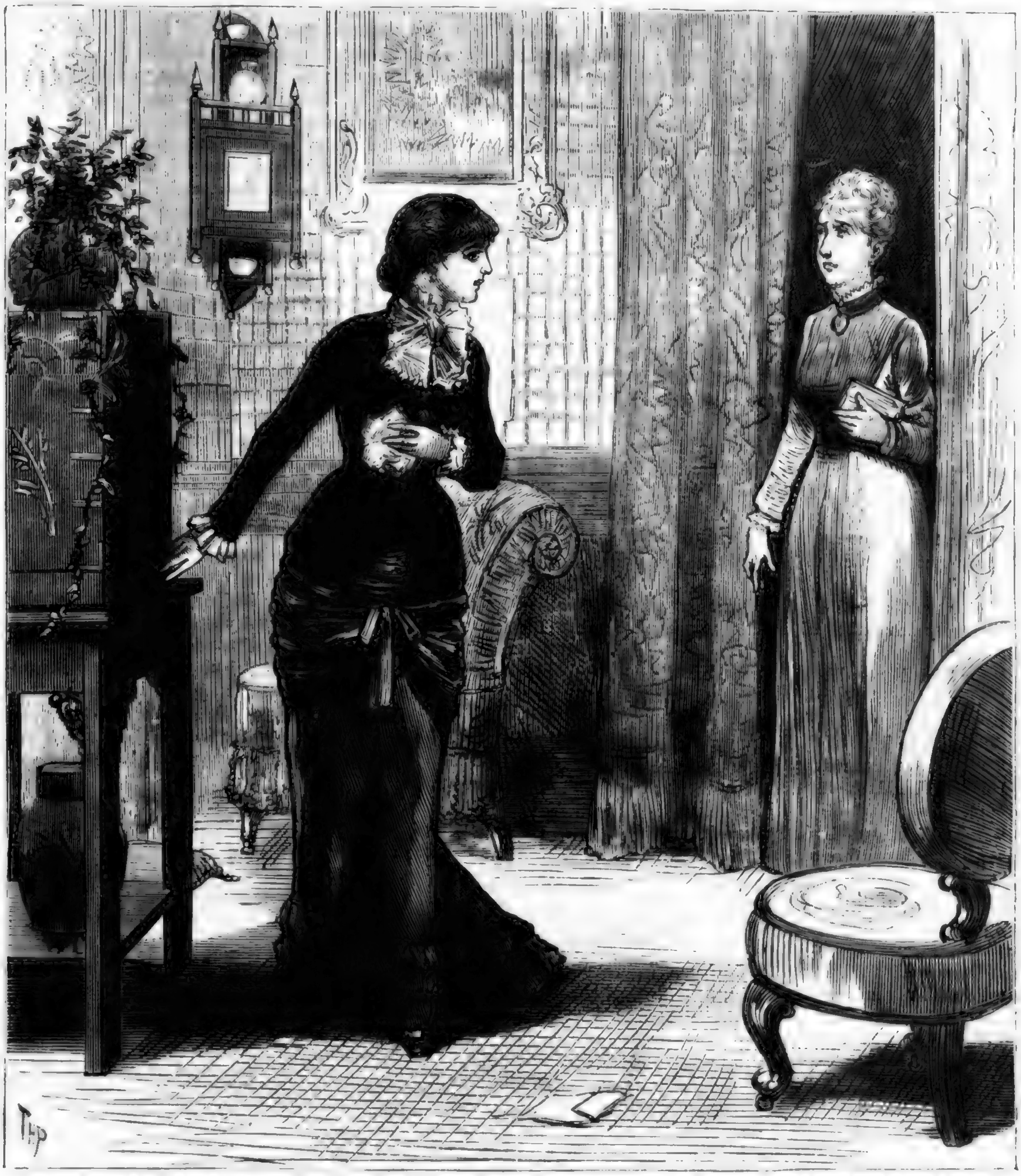
"I never believed them," I say quietly, but I lift her head so that I can see her face.

And daring me with her brown eyes—the laughing, tender, lovely eyes that Archie loved—she answers:

"You have guessed it all, I know."

* * * * * * *

The leaves are falling, and the year has grown old. Out on Archie's grave the matted grass must be dry and withered, and there are no flowers there—not one. I wonder if he, listening over the river in the white-walled city of God, can hear the ringing of Birdie's wedding-bells?



"NOT GUILTY!"—"SHE RUSHED TO THE JAPANESE CABINET, FLUNG THEM INTO A SECRET DRAWER, AND WHILE HER HAND STILL TOUCHED THE GRIFFIN'S HEAD THAT CONCEALED THE SPRING, MRS. MAITLAND APPEARED UPON THE THRESHOLD."

"NOT GUILTY!"

By ETTA W. PIERCE.

Chapter XIX.—Continued.

She cried out in terror, and the deputy warden hurried forward and gave her a glass of water. She held it to her father's lips. He revived. A spasm contracted his face. He snatched his child to his breast, as if to save her from some great threatening peril.

"Is it true?" she gasped—"is the colonel's story true?"

"Every word! Gerald Fortescue your lover! Oh, God! spare me this! It is too much," groaned the prisoner. "Now I will tell you something which not even Dysart ever guessed. It is the secret of my unreasonable trust in Fortescue—the secret, also, of his deadly hate for me. The colonel called him my father's *protégé?*"

"Yes."

"That is not all—he was his illegitimate son, and consequently my half-brother. This fact Fortescue himself told me at Baden-Baden on the morning of that appointed duel which might have made one of us a fratricide. He showed me letters which my father had

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written him; they established beyond doubt a fact that I had more than once suspected. He pretended to consider himself the rightful heir to the fortune which, by will, had been given entirely to me. He talked a great deal concerning his wrongs. I tried to be generous—I allowed him free access to my purse; treated him in all ways like a brother, and, for my father's sake, kept the secret of his birth. To my blind, implicit faith in the man I owe my ruin."

"Your half-brother!" cried Meg, in mingled amazement and terror. "This relationship makes his sin more revolting. And his love for me—horror! I cannot speak of it!"

Philip Harmon clasped her closer to his side. An expression of bitter anguish swept his face.

"He has filled my cup of misery to the brim. The wealth which surrounds him is mine—stolen from me by the basest means a man ever employed. He destroyed my home, robbed me of everything that gives value to life. He made you, in your helpless infancy, a pensioner upon Dysart's bounty. Ah! it was decreed that Ishmael should triumph utterly over Isaac! But for him, I might have won the heart of the woman I loved. My child, you would not have come to this prison to-day, had you thought me a murderer?"

"No."

"Your mother was as dear to me as my own soul. I was utterly incapable of raising my hand against her life."

"That I believe with my whole heart."

"Thank God!" he said, solemnly. "I could not have borne any other verdict from *your* lips!"

She looked him straight in his sad, haggard eyes.

"Who *was* the murderer?"

He shuddered, as if she had touched an unhealed wound.

"I do not know—I shall never know this side of the grave. The years go on, but fail to throw any light on that dark secret. And yet"—in a musing tone—"I feel confident that if one person lives who knows more about the deed than all others—who could speak if he would (but he never will!)—who could open this prison door to me if he would, that person is Fortescue."

"You answer me as did Colonel Dysart—yes, these are almost his very words. Do you think that Fortescue murdered my mother?"

"My darling, I have thought so much upon the subject, that I wonder the bare mention of it does not drive me mad. I do not accuse Fortescue of her death, but I am convinced (as, I think, Dysart is) that he holds the key to the mystery—that he held it when I was condemned to die on the gallows, and when he robbed me of my entire fortune, and when the gates of this living tomb closed upon me, never more to open."

"If that be so," cried Meg, "he is not a man, but a fiend!"

They were silent for a moment, each absorbed in troubled thoughts. Then Philip Harmon said, sadly:

"My child, I wish you to return at once to the protection of Dysart. It is not strange that he was angry with you for a while. I see plainly that you are warm-hearted, impulsive, imprudent and lovable. Return to him. You have no home, no resources, no other friend."

"I beg you to let me remain in Gerald Fortescue's house," she answered, firmly, "till I can see him once more. I am sure that Moultrie will tell him my story. After his arrival, I promise to go to the colonel."

"Why do you seek another interview with that man—what do you wish to do?"

"To demand of him the wealth which he plundered from you nineteen years ago, and the facts that he has withheld regarding my mother's death."

"Act with prudence. His love for you will be turned to hate, when he discovers that you are my child."

Her grand eyes flashed.

"I am not afraid of Gerald Fortescue—on the contrary, I defy him. Oh, my poor, wronged, suffering darling!" She slipped down to the floor, and clasping her hands about his knees, lifted her ardent face, full now of a prophetic light. "I swear to devote the rest of my life to you—I swear to live for the sole purpose of clearing your name, and freeing you from this place! With heart and soul I will work for it. I am only a girl—weak, almost friendless, with no influence, no money, but I am not dismayed. To be your deliverer, your avenger—that would be joy indeed. How do you know that I, in my feebleness, may not be able to accomplish more for you than all your old-time friends, in their strength and power?"

He lifted her up, and kissed her solemnly.

"My child, do not delude yourself in this way. Long ago hope and I parted company. God keep you from that man! You will not wring from him either his ill-gotten gains or his cherished secrets."

A clock struck. Harmon started—heaved a great breath.

"You must go now, my darling, the time is up. Make no rash vows. You must not waste your energies nor wear out your heart in fruitless efforts for me. No, your life is dark enough already. I trust the wisdom and judgment of Dysart to lead you aright. Obey him in all things. See Gerald Fortescue, if you like, and tell him that a day of reckoning will yet come for him and for me. Meanwhile, may God bless and keep you! Now, you must leave me."

She clung to him, reluctant and weeping.

"Surely you will let me visit you often?"

He shook his head.

"No, no; it is terrible for me to see you in this place. Where are the persons who came with you?"

"Waiting in the warden's room—they are the same good Samaritans that cared for me in Blackhaven. Apart from Colonel Dysart, I look upon them as my only friends."

He embraced her tenderly; then led her toward the door.

"I have not seen Dysart's face for nineteen years," he said; "it has hitherto seemed to me that I could not bear to meet him; but now you have changed everything—you have connected me once more with the outer world. Ask my old friend to come to me, and remember that I shall know no peace till I hear you are in some place of safety, under his care again."

Her soft arms were around his neck; she answered, bravely:

"Have no fears for me. I will send the colonel to you—you shall no longer be left alone and comfortless. Before I go, tell me that you forgive all my indifference and neglect, and my tardy belief in your innocence."

"My darling, I forgive you freely—freely!"

She turned, and passed out into the warden's room, where the Leiths were patiently waiting.

CHAPTER XX.

A DISCOVERY.

"SHALL we go now?" said Leith, considerately averting his eyes from Meg's pale, tearful face.

"Yes," she answered.

Miss Prue drew the girl's hand through her arm, and they descended the steps, entered the carriage and turned homeward, in the wind and rain and gathering dark.

No word was spoken, no question asked. Miss Prue gave Meg's gloved fingers an occasional pressure, to express her sympathy, but that was all. They crossed the bridge and went on through the streets of the city proper. At last Meg spoke:

"I have discovered the whole secret," she said. "Gerald Fortescue is my father's half-brother."

Miss Prue jumped.

"Bless me! what an escape for you! You might have married your uncle!"

Meg repeated, almost word for word, her conversation with Philip Harmon. Leith looked very grave, Miss Prue bristled with indignation.

"Gerald Fortescue is a fiend in human form!" she cried; "and to think of him as a judge—a man extolled and admired by everybody! What hypocrisy, what total depravity! I am disgusted with life when I hear of such things! Oh, these men!—wolves in sheep's clothing, all of them!"

"Miss Grey," said Leith, "surely you cannot mean to return to Fortescue's house?"

"I must," she answered, calmly.

"Is it wise, is it safe for you to do so? Remember the home that once received you at Blackhaven is open to you still. You will be more than welcome there. Use your eloquence, Prue."

Miss Leith obeyed, but in vain. Meg was not ungrateful, she thanked the two with tears in her eyes, but her resolution remained unshaken.

"I shall await him in his own house," she said; "do not try to dissuade me—it is useless. You know how willful I am."

Yes, they knew something about her will. Leith looked displeased, Miss Prue ruffled and perplexed.

"At least," she entreated, "promise to come to us if you need help—as I am sure you will."

"I promise that, faithfully," replied Meg.

They left her at Gerald Fortescue's door. As Leith assisted her to alight, she looked up in his face, and said:

"My grand marriage has come to naught, you see. I am well punished, am I not? How utterly I despise myself to-night!"

Then she turned hastily, and vanished inside the portal.

A depressing silence reigned in the house. Mrs. Maitland had not left her room. Dinner was waiting for Meg. She had no appetite; the thought of the gray prison hung like a weight on her heart, the odor of the guard-house flowers seemed to cling to her garments; before her eyes she could see only a wasted figure in prison uniform, and a pale, worn face crowned with prematurely white hair. Yet it was unwise to excite the curiosity of the servants by any unusual behavior. She must preserve her outward composure. So she seated herself at the stately table and went through the solitary meal—how, she did not know. Before it was ended Colonel Dysart's telegram arrived.

She took the message from the yellow envelope, read it carefully, hesitated, pondered; but did not change her resolution.

"No, nunky," she said, as if her old friend was present, "I cannot obey you. My place is here for a little while. I have accusations to make, reparation to demand. Forgive me."

Night fell, the storm began to rage wildly through the trees of the Common, and up and down the stately street. Meg ascended to the red boudoir. The gas had been lighted there, a fire burned in the grate. She sat down before it to collect her thoughts.

This house was Philip Harmon's—it had been taken from him by cruel fraud; all the wealth here was his. If there was justice in heaven, such wrong as he had suffered could not go unavenged. Her heart burned within her. She was ready to devote her whole life to the service of this unhappy father. Yes, in her newly-awakened love and remorse and compassion Meg would have died for him willingly.

By-and-by she was seized with an irresistible longing to look again on the portrait of her murdered mother—the portrait which Philip Harmon had painted. Go to the chamber where it hung—Judge Fortescue's chamber? No, that she could not do. After some deliberation she rang the bell—a housemaid answered it.

"Sara," said Miss Grey, "there is a portrait of a lady hanging in Judge Fortescue's room. I wish to examine it. Do you think you could take it from the wall and bring it here to me, unknown to any one?"

Miss Grey was a great favorite with all the servants, and especially with Sara.

"To be sure, miss," she answered, and vanished.

Directly Meg heard her returning along the corridor. She appeared on the threshold of the boudoir with the portrait in her hand, tugging at it as if it was no light weight.

"Put it down," said Meg, and Sara obeyed, not without some inward wonder, and retreated from the boudoir.

Against the velvet arm of a sofa leaned the gilt and ebony frame. The gaslight shone on the beautiful, melancholy face enshrined therein. With a swelling heart Meg looked at this, her father's work. The expression of hopeless heartsickness which he had thrown into the eyes and stamped upon the perfect lips was wonderful. Truly, the fatal gift of beauty had been given in full measure to Agnes Ferrol. Meg shuddered to remember that from this very house her blood still cried to heaven for vengeance. Here, in darkness and mystery, she had met her fate.

"Oh, if you could only speak!" she half sobbed, to the portrait, "and tell me what hand it was that dealt the blow, and what service I can best render my poor father, you might make some reparation for the ruin you wrought in his life. You loved Gerald Fortescue! I, your child, cannot judge you, for I, too, have felt that man's wicked power—only yesterday I was ready to sell myself for his wealth and position—flesh-pots of Egypt. Who ended your short, unhappy life? How could you sleep all these years in your grave, while my father was shut in a living tomb, disgraced and ruined!"

The sad eyes of the portrait looked back at her with a sort of dumb reproach. As the uncertain light played across the face the lips seemed stirring to open, as if to reveal the secret which Meg desired to hear.

Leaning forward, with her chin on her hand, the girl gazed at the picture in helpless fascination. Lilian's lap-dog sprang out of his satin basket and crept whining to her side. He missed the runaway. Meg caressed the poor brute absently. She had given scarcely a thought to Moultrie or his bride since morning. But now it flashed upon her that *she* was the heiress of all that wealth for which the handsome Southerner had sold himself. If, by any means, she could right her father's wrongs and strip Fortescue of his booty, Danton Moultrie's marriage would be sure to end in bitter disappointment.

For a long time Meg sat gazing at her father's work; then she rang for Sara.

"You may take it away," she said.

With an effort the girl lifted the portrait.

"It's mortal heavy, miss," she remarked; "I had my match to get it down from the wall alone—'twas put up uncommon strong."

"Be sure to return it exactly to its old position, Sara. I do not wish any one to know that it has been disturbed."

"Yes, miss." She gave her burden a slight shake. "It's queer, but something has broke loose inside, and it moves when one lifts it up."

"What?"—Meg ran to the housemaid—"where! Let me see!"

"I'm sure *I've* done it no harm," said Sara, alarmed by the other's manner. "I heard the thumping when I was taking the thing down from the wall."

"Shake it again," said Meg.

She obeyed. A dull thud answered her.

"You hear it, miss?" said Sara, uneasily. "Whatever can it be? A rat inside the canvas, miss? Judge Fortescue never allows the servants to meddle with this picture—not even to dust it. He's given us his express orders that way many times. You're the only person I would have dared touch it for; but as you're soon to be mistress here, I couldn't refuse."

"Sara, you can leave it a little longer. Have no fear—you will not be blamed. I will ring when I want you again."

Sara retired a second time, amazed at Miss Grey's conduct, and suspicious that the portrait, which was so like her own fair self, had totally bewitched her.

The moment she was alone, Meg knelt down on the deep carpet, and breathlessly examined every inch of her mother's picture.

In five minutes she had made a discovery. The back was of thick cloth, closely fitted to the elaborate frame; but by pressing her hand carefully over its surface, Meg could define the contour of some substance—hard, evidently, and flat—concealed within. She felt along the painted canvas for a corresponding outline, but failed to find it. The portrait had a double back, and in the space betwixt the two, some article, valuable or otherwise, was hidden away.

Greatly startled, she ran to Lilian's writing-desk, took from thence a sharp knife, and made an opening in the cloth large enough to admit her hand. Something rustled, a bright color shone; the next moment Meg had drawn forth—what? A few old letters, tied with a faded ribbon, and a crimson-covered book fastened with gold clasps. She opened the latter, and, with a great thrill, read the name on the fly-leaf, "*Agnes Ferrol Harmon.*"

Meg held in her grasp the lost journal for which such ineffectual search had been made at the time of her father's trial, and the letters, still odorous of some French perfume, that Agnes Harmon had written to the object of her secret and disastrous passion.

This discovery was so sudden, so unexpected, she could scarcely believe her own eyes. She turned the crimson volume and the discolored envelopes over and over in utter bewilderment. She needed no voice to tell her that Gerald Fortescue had concealed these things in the portrait—an ingenious repository for such dangerous treasures.

While Philip Harmon was being tried for his life, his enemy had held possession of this journal—he had kept it secreted during all the anxious inquiry which the friends of the suspected man had made for it.

She ran to a Japanese cabinet in the corner, and threw book and letters therein; then, composing her face as best she could, rang a third time for Sara, and bade her replace the picture in Judge Fortescue's chamber. The rent which she had made in the back was not noticed by the girl; she might have thought the weight had decreased somewhat since she last lifted it, but she said nothing.

The portrait was removed, the door closed, and Meg was left with the precious booty she had secured.

She opened the packet of letters first. They were carefully arranged according to their respective dates, after the methodical manner peculiar to Judge Fortescue. The first was written in Paris, previous to Agnes Ferrol's ill-starred marriage. It said:

> "Thank you for the sheet-music and the flowers; but papa was angry when they came—he positively forbids me to receive such attentions from you. I am very unhappy, Gerald. In vain I plead your kindness; in vain I speak of the time in London when our acquaintance began—the dreadful night you brought papa home to me, wounded in a quarrel at a card-table, and all your generosity and goodness in the days that followed—he will not listen, he does not like you. Poverty is an unpardonable sin in his eyes, though heaven knows we are poor enough ourselves! To-day a stranger dined with us, an American, named Harmon—handsome, well-bred and—rich. He overwhelmed me with attentions and fine compliments, and papa makes no effort to conceal his gratification. I foresee that he intends to cultivate Mr. Harmon. My heart is heavy; I dare not confess my love for you. Papa can be very, very violent at times; his anger terrifies me. I fear he has chosen this Philip Harmon to be my future husband. If so, heaven help us!"

Meg opened the second letter. This was full of despair. Harmon had proposed, and she must accept him—her father commanded it—and forget the man she loved. Her heart was breaking, and the future was a blank.

Another said:

> "You bid me show a proper firmness, and be true to myself and you—to tell Philip Harmon that my heart is yours. I cannot, I dare not! My father has set all his future hopes upon this match. I know him too well to attempt to thwart him. I must marry the man he has chosen for me. Oh, my love, my love, forgive me, and good-by!"

A half-dozen other letters were full of the same lament. Agnes Ferrol's weak, plastic nature was plainly revealed in them. One, written only the day before her marriage, bade Gerald Fortescue an eternal farewell, and implored him never to cross her path again. Here a long interval occurred in the dates. The next letter was written in America—yes, in the very house where Meg now sat, perhaps in the very room. She glanced nervously over her shoulder, half expecting to see some ghostly shape standing there; but ghosts are obsolete; they do not come to modern boudoirs in the glare of gaslights. Meg read on. This was the way in which Agnes Ferrol, wife and mother, addressed Gerald Fortescue, after a lapse of two years:

> "You torment, you persecute me mercilessly! I cannot bear it! If you ever cared for me in the least, if I still retain any portion of your esteem and consideration, I entreat you to cease your visits to this house—to cease following me to the houses of my friends, and so provoking cruel comment. You spoke to me in a most unwarrantable manner last night at Mrs. Heliotrope's ball. Am I not wretched enough already? Do you wish to drive me mad? On my knees I beg you to come near me no more, to speak to me no more. I cannot fly from you; I have no one to defend me from your persecutions. Be generous—the world is wide; there are other cities in which you can seek fame and fortune. Go, and never let me see your face again. I am tired of life—at any moment I would be glad to lay it down. A woman who can love neither her husband nor her child, is a monster unfit to live. I appeal to all that is manly and good in your nature to torture me no longer. I cannot avoid you, I cannot escape you, unless you withdraw from this place. Philip trusts you, he asks you here continually, he makes my position unbearable, and I dare not complain."

The blood leaped indignantly through Meg's veins. The next envelope held these lines:

> "My cup of misery and humiliation is full. I have read the note which you thrust into my hand at the play to-night. Heaven knows I never thought to fall so low as this! You ask me to leave my husband's house, my child, the world where I am at least respected, and fly with you to another continent. No, no—a thousand times no! I may be weak, but I am not wicked. I will go to Philip and tell him everything."

Meg drew a great breath of relief; but the next letter made her heart stand still. It said:

> "You have conquered! I cease to struggle against a fate that is stronger than I. Good-by to peace, hope, heaven—to husband, child, home——"

Hark! Somewhere near at hand a door closed smartly. Meg started and listened. A step was advancing along the corridor. Swift as lightning, she gathered up the journal and letters. Where could she hide them? She rushed to the Japanese cabinet, flung them into a secret drawer, and while her hand still touched the griffin's head that concealed its spring, Mrs. Maitland appeared upon the threshold of the boudoir.

A *robe de chambre* wrapped her heavy figure; she carried a novel in her hand. As she stepped into the room, Meg's pale, agitated face and confused manner immediately arrested her attention.

"Are you amusing yourself?" she said, in a sharp voice.

"Not particularly," answered Meg, as she retreated in haste from the cabinet.

Cold dislike and suspicion mingled in Mrs. Maitland's face.

"How pale you look!" she sneered—"how wild and strange! You have been out all the afternoon, the servants tell me."

A flush of crimson mounted to Meg's white cheek.

"Yes," she answered; "visiting a friend."

"That is what the English call bad form. You show very little sympathy with the judge in his family trouble. You should have followed my example, and remained shut up in your own room to-day."

"Solitude bores me—I am not adapted to it," said Meg, dryly.

To her consternation, Mrs. Maitland settled herself on the sofa.

"No more am I. I will sit here a while with you. Lilian weighs on my mind like a nightmare. To tell the truth, Miss Grey, *you* are the person to be blamed for this elopement. I am confident the poor child and her lover would have gone on peaceably together, and married in a proper manner, but for your interference. I wonder where she is to-night? Has the judge found her yet? Not likely."

Meg did not answer. She was thinking only of the crimson book and the letters in the corner cabinet.

"I trust you will never use your power over the judge for the injury of Lilian," went on Mrs. Maitland. "Everybody knows how hard and unjust elderly men with young wives can be. I fear you will now hate the poor child, and Mr. Moultrie also—especially as he has plainly declared that he never cared for you. Pray do not try to induce Gerald to disinherit his daughter. Are you listening, Miss Grey? No, you are not, and I know of nothing so exasperating as to talk to a person who has deliberately shut both ears to one's voice."

"I am very fond of Lilian," answered Meg, in a strange tone. "I shall do nothing to harm her. She is not accountable for the sins of another. I tried to save her, but I failed. It is now my sincere wish that Danton Moultrie may make her happy, but I am sure he never will."

"Of course *you* think that," sneered Mrs. Maitland. "*I* do not; on the contrary, I quite believe in the young fellow. To-morrow we may begin to look for the judge's return. Perhaps he may bring bride and bridegroom with him. That would be awkward for you. How lonely the house seems to-night! I could almost vow that something evil was in it. What is that paper on the carpet there?"

The blood rushed anew into Meg's face. She had dropped one of the letters in her hasty flight to the cabinet. Her hand trembled as she hurriedly picked it up.

"What an ancient envelope!" cried Mrs. Maitland, whose dull eyes could be sharp enough upon certain occasions. "Why, it is yellow with age! Let me look at it."

"Pardon me," said Meg, and she coolly thrust the letter into her pocket.

Mrs. Maitland shrugged her shoulders, opened her novel and began to read. She had made up her mind to pass the evening with Meg.

Half an hour dragged by. Now and then the woman on the sofa cast a wary glance at her companion over the top of her book. To sit there, wild with impatience and apprehension, and yet obliged to preserve an outward calm, was exquisite torture for our heroine. Perhaps Mrs. Maitland perceived something of this, and secretly enjoyed the situation.

The fire snapped, the storm raged across the windows. Once Meg arose and drew back the muffling curtain. A terrible night, full of darkness and tumult. The wind roared up and down the street like a ravening wolf. For a space she stared blankly out into the tempest, then returned to her seat.

"How uneasy you are!" said Mrs. Maitland, irritably. "Really, your eyes are as wild as a hawk's. That reminds me that I have had no tea. Be so good as to ring for the tray."

"Now? It is very late," said Meg, glancing feverishly at the clock.

"That does not matter. Our servants are to be relied upon at all hours."

Meg rang, and the tray was brought in. A tedious while was occupied by Mrs. Maitland in drinking one cup of tea.

"I have slept a great deal to-day," she explained, cheerfully. "I am in no haste to retire; but I advise *you* to go to bed, Miss Grey—you look sadly shaken."

Nine, ten o'clock struck, then eleven. Mrs. Maitland made no movement toward departure. She lay on her sofa, and read her novel serenely. Meg felt that her self-control must soon succumb to the strain thus put upon it. This trying day had wrought her up to a high pitch of nervous excitement.

"It is *very* late!" she said, desperately.

"Yes," assented Mrs. Maitland, without lifting her eyes from her book. "Go and rest."

A hysterical scream was on Meg's lips. In another moment it would break forth. She fled to her own chamber, determined to wait there till that tiresome old woman should leave the boudoir, and she could safely withdraw letters and book from the cabinet.

She walked the floor; she opened her window and let wind and rain beat in upon her; she was stifling, gasping for breath. Finally she flung herself down on her pink-and-white bed, to wait until she should hear Mrs. Maitland pass through the corridor to her own room. Terribly fatigued she was, and all unawares, exhausted nature gave way, and in spite of her great anxiety and distress Meg slept.

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Somewhere in the wee small hours she awoke with a great start. The gas was burning brightly. She sprang to her feet, bewildered, confused. The letters—the journal! Had Mrs. Maitland yet left the boudoir?

Lighting a night-lamp which chanced to be on her toilet-table, Meg swiftly and noiselessly made her way to that apartment. Yes, it was empty, dark and still. Mrs. Maitland and her novel had vanished. Meg ran to the cabinet; she touched the spring of the secret drawer. A cry burst from her lips. The crimson-covered book and the old, discolored letters were gone!

CHAPTER XXI.

A FIRE.

GONE! She searched the drawer, every nook and corner of the cabinet, even the carpet round about it, but in vain. Red book, old letters had vanished as mysteriously as though Agnes Harmon's ghostly hand had been stretched from the world of shades to snatch them away.

Meg was stunned, bewildered, but only for a moment. She felt that the contents of the drawer had disappeared by human agency alone. There was but one person in the house who could have appropriated the precious things. She took up her lamp, went straight to Mrs. Maitland's chamber and rapped. No answer. She shook the door, she called loudly. At last a movement inside the room told that its occupant was still awake. A step crossed the floor, and Mrs. Maitland, with a calm but slightly surprised front, opened the door to this late visitor. A shawl was thrown about her shoulders, her hair was in crimping-pins, and she still held her novel in her hand. It was plain that she had not been in bed.

"Dear me! you are up late, Miss Grey," she said; "what is the matter?"

Disheveled and pale, her dark eyes shining with mingled wrath and fear, a strained, tense look on her face, Meg confronted her.

"Be so good as to return me the things which you have taken from the cabinet," she said, sharply.

Mrs. Maitland drew back with a vacant stare.

"Things!—what things?"

"A book—some letters."

"Letters addressed to *you?*" pointedly.

"No, to Judge Fortescue."

"And by what right, may I ask, do you take possession of the judge's letters?" sneered Mrs. Maitland. "I doubt if your betrothed husband, infatuated as he is, would approve of such a liberty. He very properly resents all prying in his private affairs."

"I do not propose to enter into explanations," said Meg; "I simply ask you to give me back the book and letters."

"I have seen no letters, no book, save this which I hold in my hand," answered Mrs. Maitland, contemptuously. "I am not in the habit of meddling with other people's property. You must be beside yourself, coming to me at such an hour, on an errand like this."

"Give them to me—they are mine!" urged Meg, wildly. "Oh, you cannot know what you are doing! It is useless to deny it—I am *sure* you have taken them. I beg—yes, *beg* you to give them back to me!"

Unmoved and scornful, Mrs. Maitland listened.

"You are laboring under some strange illusion, Miss Grey. It is nearly morning. I advise you to go to bed. When Judge Fortescue arrives I will lay this matter before him."

"I *demand* the book, which is my own property—the letters you may keep, if you like."

"Shall I tell you again, Miss Grey, that your talk is like Sanscrit to me? Are you quite certain you are in your proper mind? I know nothing of the things you ask for. At this unseasonable hour, pray take your high tragedy airs and your mysterious demands elsewhere;" and she deliberately closed the door upon her visitor, and turned the key in the lock.

Meg went back to her own chamber, fully convinced that Mrs. Maitland held possession of Agnes Harmon's journal and letters. Sleep she could not. Morning came at last—that morning which was to bring Colonel Dysart, and, without doubt, some word from Gerald Fortescue, or, perhaps, the latter in person. She made her toilet carefully, and when the breakfast-bell rang, went calmly down to the table. Mrs. Maitland, usually a late riser, was there before her, playing languidly with Lilian's lapdog. She gave Meg a long, wary look, then a very amiable smile. The previous night might have been a dream, a delusion, so far as this woman's manner betrayed any remembrance of it.

"My dear Miss Grey, I hope you have slept well," she said, sweetly.

"Oh, perfectly!" answered Meg, with enthusiasm.

"How glad I am to hear it! You are a wonderful young creature—quite a study, in fact. To day, without doubt, we shall have news of the judge. I long inexpressibly for his return."

"And I, also," answered Meg, calmly.

"It is just possible that we may have some strange revelations when he comes," said Mrs. Maitland, with a serene smile.

"I am positive of it," replied Meg.

They drank their coffee, and ate their cold chicken and hot muffins with calm indifference. Mrs. Maitland made commonplace remarks, to which Meg answered politely. Not the slightest allusion to the preceding night escaped either. Meg watched the elder woman as some beautiful tabby might a mouse; Mrs. Maitland was all alert to her finger-tips; yet both went through the meal like accomplished actresses.

"What a charming *tête-à-tête* breakfast we have had, dear," said the judge's sister-in-law, as she arose from the table. "I trust to meet you again at lunch. Be sure to take good care of yourself," and she sailed away to her own room, and Meg fled to the red boudoir.

Her first act was to examine the cabinet anew. Alas! the secret drawer was utterly empty—no repentant hand had replaced the lost journal and letters. Perhaps in that book some incontestable proof of her father's innocence was hidden away. How could she recover it? She went to the window, and stood there, looking out into the pleasant sunny morning which had followed the storm of the night. A man was passing along the pavement below. At sight of the beautiful face shining out in the opening of the boudoir-curtain, he paused, his eager, anxious countenance assumed a relieved look. He raised his hat, and Meg nodded, with a faint smile.

"I dare say he scarcely expected to see me alive this morning," she thought, shrugging her handsome shoulders. "No doubt, Miss Prue sent him this way to discover if I had survived the night in the den of my enemies."

Indifferently she watched the stalwart figure go on and vanish. Meg was selfish in trouble. Robin Leith could give her no aid in her present perplexity, so he was as nothing to her now.

She looked at the clock, and began to think of Colonel Dysart—to long for his arrival. Hour after hour went by, but, for reasons already known to the reader, the colonel did not keep his appointment. Neither was any message received from the judge. This was odd; Mrs. Maitland, in particular, felt it to be so. While devouring her mayonnaise at lunch, with wary eyes fixed on Meg, who seemed more restive than in the similar ordeal of breakfast, she said:

"I am positive that he must have found Lilian by this time. The child has not flown far. It is singular that we hear nothing. How can so ardent a lover as Gerald allow his betrothed to remain twenty-four hours ignorant of his movements?"

"It *is* strange," assented Meg, dryly. There was a blank pause; then she looked fixedly at her companion, and added, "Have you any recollection of a visit which I paid to your room last night?"

Mrs. Maitland peered around a silver *epergne* of fruit to smile serenely on the questioner.

"A very vivid one! I hope you are not troubled with sleep-walking, or temporary aberration of mind, or anything of that unpleasant character, my dear?"

Meg arose, stern and beautiful, from her chair.

"I ask you once more, where are the letters and book which you took from the cabinet in Lilian's boudoir?"

"And I answer you, as I did last night," replied Mrs. Maitland, insolently. "I have no knowledge of the things you mention, and it would be to your credit, perhaps, if *you* had none. I cannot imagine how such articles could have fallen into your possession since Judge Fortescue's departure."

"In due time you will receive a satisfactory explanation," said Meg, with a strange smile. "Meanwhile, give me back that which you have taken."

"Never!" cried Mrs. Maitland, hotly. "If I really had such things in my possession, Miss Grey, I would restore them only to the judge himself."

"You make assurance doubly sure. Your answer convinces me that I have not accused you wrongfully."

Mrs. Maitland frowned.

"I decline to talk further on so strange a subject, Miss Grey," she said, and straightway relapsed into stubborn silence.

Lunch was scarcely over when Mrs. Belle Ryder rustled into the boudoir. She embraced Mrs. Maitland, who detested her, and gave the tips of her gloved fingers to Meg.

"I have come to ask about that naughty Lilian," she cried. "And so the judge has gone in pursuit, like Lord Ullin in the ballad? Of course, he will forgive and bless her, and accept with resignation the Southern Adonis as a son-in-law. Love is omnipotent. It may be very foolish, but I always feel great sympathy for such willful young folks."

The handsome widow laughed, but there was a serious look in her big brown eyes.

"Then, in spite of your own marriage, you believe in love?" sneered Mrs. Maitland.

"I do, indeed. If I ever wed again, I will surely make a love-match."

"How romantic! Somebody ought to tell that young lawyer, Leith, of your resolution—or perhaps you would prefer that he should hear it from your own lips?"

Meg left the two to their conversation, and slipped away to her own room. It was plain that Colonel Dysart would not come to-day. After a while she rang the bell for the housemaid, Sara. That young person promptly appeared. Meg motioned her to close the door, then said:

"Sara, I need help; you must give it me."

"Willingly, miss; what can I do?" answered Sara.

"Do you attend Mrs. Maitland, in her own room?"

"Yes, miss, since that French creature, Celeste, ran off with Miss Fortescue."

"Have you seen anywhere about her chamber a red-covered book? It is my property, Sara. She has taken it from me, and I would give the best years of my life to find it again. There are letters, too, in faded, old-fashioned envelopes."

"I have seen nothing of the sort, miss. Lor', you look worried to death! Shall I search around for them? Mrs. Maitland is a sly one, but I know where most things are kept in her chamber."

Meg took the girl's coarse hand in her own slight, delicate one.

"Find that book, Sara, and you will do me a great, great service."

She slipped a crisp banknote into the hard fingers. Sara beamed.

"I'll try, miss."

"Wait! Have you seen her reading to-day?"

"Only her novels."

"Sara, the recovery of the things which I have asked you to look for means life or death, perhaps, to one who is very dear to me. Be careful not to excite Mrs. Maitland's suspicion, but begin your search as soon as possible."

With these instructions Sara went away, and Meg was left again to her reflections.

The day crept on wearily. No word arrived from Colonel Dysart, none from Gerald Fortescue. An air of mystery and disaster seemed to have settled over everything.

Just before nightfall, Sara came softly into the room where Meg sat, heavy-hearted, and full of dark foreboding. The girl's disappointed face told her story before she could open her lips.

"I have looked all about her chamber, miss," she whispered—"in every nook and corner, and I can't find book nor letters. I got the keys to the drawers and searched them all, and the wardrobe; but the things you want are not there, neither are they in the bed, nor under the carpet, nor behind any of the ornaments."

Meg grew pale.

"Oh, what shall I do?" she cried, wringing her impotent hands.

"I'm sure I don't know, miss," answered the sympathetic but helpless Sara.

Meg dismissed her humble ally. It was plain that Mrs. Maitland would keep the journal and letters till the judge's return, and then restore them to him; and she—Meg—would never know what her mother's hand had written in that red book, and all hope of finding there some clew to Agnes Harmon's murderer must be abandoned. After a solitary evening spent in troubled thought, Meg, with a heavy heart and a tired body, went to bed and to sleep.

Wild dreams of Philip Harmon and the great gray prison tormented her for hours. Toward morning she suddenly awoke, with a shriek of distress ringing in her ears. She started up on her pillow and listened. It came from Mrs. Maitland's chamber.

Again and again the sharp, agonized cry smote the darkness and silence. Meg flung on a dressing-gown, and thrusting her feet into slippers, ran out into the corridor, and followed the cry to Mrs. Maitland's door.

"Help! help!" she heard a voice within screaming. "Sara! Miss Grey!—where are you all?"

Meg rushed into the room.

In the middle of the bed Mrs. Maitland was sitting bolt upright, helpless with terror. The silken curtains, which had been looped to one side, the belaced pillows, the smart counterpane, were all alive with leaping, crackling tongues of fire. A little inlaid table by the side of the bed had been overturned; on the carpet lay a lamp and a novel—these last two things explained the situation. She had fallen asleep while reading, and the unconscious thrusting forth of a restless arm in dreams had upset the light and done the mischief.

"Save me, Miss Grey—save me!" she cried, recognizing through the flame and smoke the fair face of her foe.

Meg seized a big porcelain jug of water, and dashed its contents full upon the screaming woman and the burning bed. Directly the servants, in different stages of undress, came rushing into the chamber. For a few moments all was dire confusion. Mrs. Maitland fainted in the arms of the footman, and was borne quickly out. The carpet was on fire, and the drapery of the toilet-table. The belaced pillows, also, were still smoking. Meg, working bravely in the midst of the danger, snatched them from the bed, and flung them extinguished into a corner. One fell without a sound; the other struck the floor with a dull thud. A thrill went over Meg. Hastily she turned and picked up the second pillow. From the drenched, smoking, disordered room she fled to her own chamber, bearing it with her.

There she found a pair of sharp scissors, and ripping open the cover, she drew triumphantly out from this unique hiding-place the lost journal and letters.

She ran to the door and locked it. There was little danger of pursuit, however. Mrs. Maitland was sadly scorched—Meg could hear her hysterical screams still ringing from some distant part of the house.

A broken prayer of thanksgiving trembled on the girl's lips. Fate, in the shape of an overturned lamp and a flash of fire, had foiled the enemy, and returned this precious booty to her own hand.

"Thank heaven! thank heaven!" she sobbed, in a transport of relief and gratitude. Then she opened the red book, and above the first entry, read these words, traced in a feeble, irregular way, as if tears had blinded the eyes of the writer:

> "Philip, I charge you never to let my daughter see this journal—never let her know what I have written here. It is the last favor that the wretched mother of your child asks of you."

Meg's eager blood grew suddenly cold. From the grave Agnes Harmon had thrust out a cold finger and closed the pages which her child was aching to read. The dead forbade it! A feeling of mingled awe and fear crept through Meg's veins. She dared not turn the closely written leaves. For a while she meditated, then said, solemnly:

"To-morrow I will go to my father's prison, and take this book to him. It is my belief that he has never seen it, and plainly it was meant for his eyes only."

Yes, this was the proper way out of her perplexity. Reverently she made letters and journal into a package; and, fully determined that no earthly power should wrest them from her again, Meg threw herself once more upon her bed, and fell asleep with her recovered treasure pressed to her heart.

It was late next morning when she awoke to find herself still clasping the precious packet. While dressing, she rang for Sara.

"How is Mrs. Maitland?" she asked.

"Downright sick with the scare and the burns, miss," answered the girl. "I've always heard 'twas dangerous to read in bed, and that's what she does constant. The doctor's given her an opiate, and she's gone to sleep. Dear me! it's very singular, miss. She told me to bring her own burnt pillows to her room, and put them in the wardrobe, but I can find only one. I've looked everywhere, but the other is gone."

"There it is, Sara."

With a smile which the girl could not comprehend, Meg pointed to a corner of her own chamber. The housemaid departed with the pillow, and our heroine went down to breakfast alone.

Mrs. Maitland had sustained such serious injuries that she was not likely to leave her bed for days—perhaps for weeks. Meg had nothing more to fear from *her*. No letters had arrived for any one, no telegram. This silence on the part of Colonel Dysart was utterly incomprehensible. As for Judge Fortescue, she started at every step outside the door. At any moment he might walk in upon her, and then!

She lingered long in the buff-and-brown breakfast-room, toying absently with the flowers in the vases, and waiting for she knew not what. Presently the colored footman opened the door.

"A gentleman in the drawing-room to see Miss Grey," he said.

Her heart gave a great bound.

"What name?"

"He mentioned none; but he said his business was most particular."

Surely it was Colonel Dysart—he had come at last! She hurried to the drawing-room. As she entered, her visitor was standing at a window, his back toward her. He turned at the click of the silver knob, and she saw, not "nunky," but the brown, severe face of Robin Leith.

All the glad expectation faded out of her eyes. Her countenance fell. In undisguised disappointment, she faltered:

"Oh, I thought it was Colonel Dysart."

The gravity of his look deepened. He took a step toward her.

"I bring you bad news," he said.

She grew pale.

"Of my father?"

"No."

"Whom, then? Oh, speak! I cannot bear suspense."

"Be calm, Miss Grey—be brave. A sad thing has happened—Colonel Dysart is dead!"

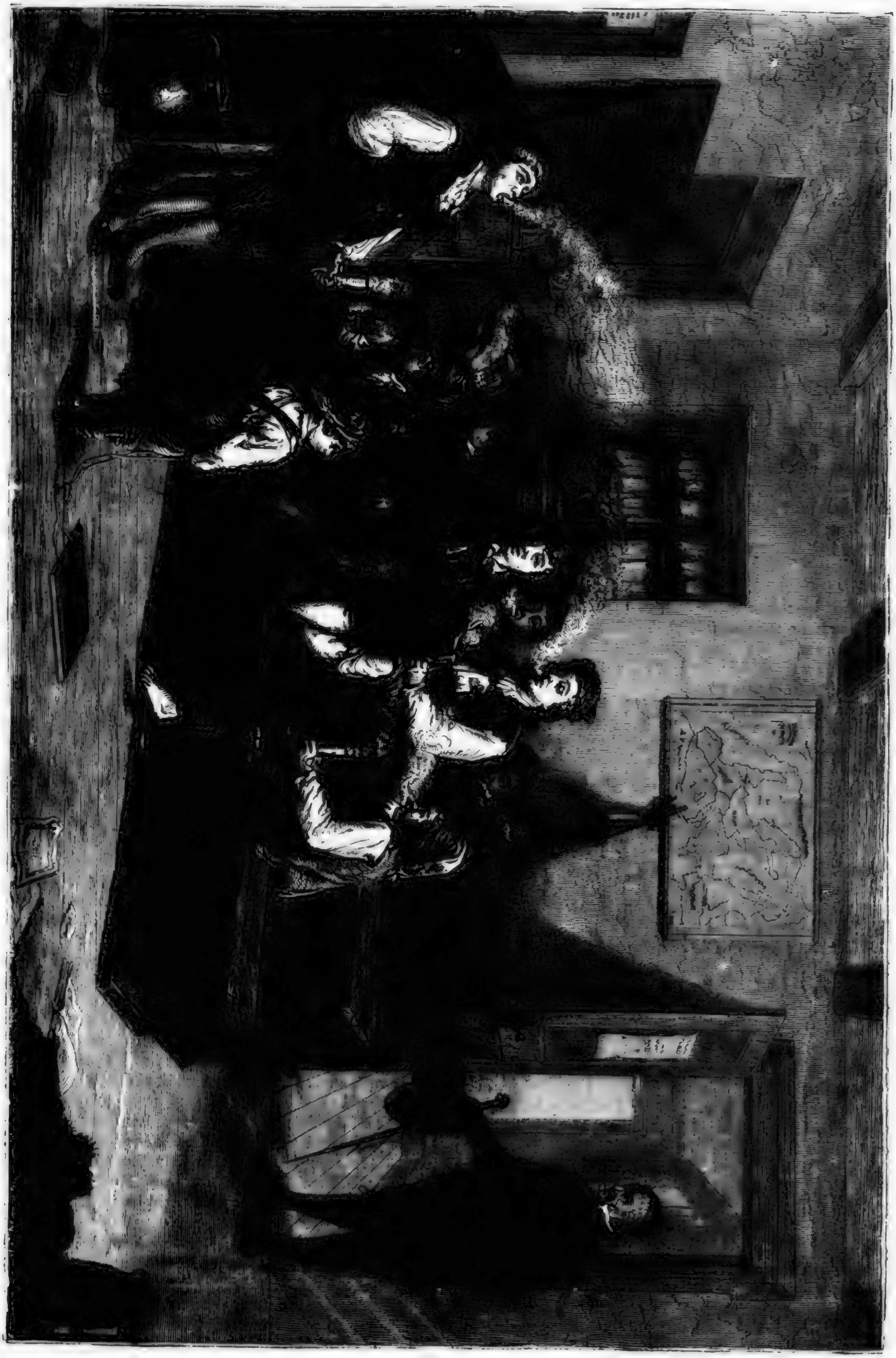
CHAPTER XXII.

AT THE GRAVE.

She was unprepared for such a shock. Her friend, her benefactor, her sole helper, her only hope—dead! She stood for a moment, as if turning to stone, then swayed and fell into Leith's outstretched arms. There she lay, with an expression of unspeakable pain stamped on her flower-face, with the heavy lashes sweeping her white cheeks like a fringe—helpless, lifeless, colorless, she rested against his breast.

He looked down upon her, and the calm of his rugged face suddenly vanished. His patient self-control gave way, like a dam in a Spring flood. The weary years of silence and repression took vengeance upon him in a moment. Overmastered by a great passion and anguish, he strained his soft, nerveless burden to his breast, and on her unconscious lips laid his own, blanched now, and quivering with a pain for which there was no speech.

When Meg regained consciousness, she found herself



AN UNAUTHORIZED TABAK'S COLLEGIUM.—SEE PAGE 73.

reclining in a deep chair, supported by Sara, who was holding a *vinaigrette* to her nostrils. As she opened her great frightened eyes, the maid called out in a relieved tone, "She is better, sir!" and from the far end of the room Robin Leith advanced and stood before Meg. His face looked as if cut from granite.

"How—when did it happen?" was all she could say.

"He was found dead in his bed, on the very night of his arrival at Gull Beach. Mr. Bond, of Blackhaven, with whom I studied law, came into my office half an hour ago and brought me the news. I cannot understand why Mrs. Dysart has not notified you of her husband's decease—it is a most unpardonable neglect."

"You see," sobbed Meg, "how that woman hates me!"

He took an abrupt turn across the floor. Her distress was a severe trial to his self-control.

"Colonel Dysart will be buried at Gull Beach this afternoon," he announced.

"So soon? What cruel haste!"

"It is imperative that I should attend the funeral—I have business with the widow."

"And I, too, must go!" cried Meg, wildly. "I must see him once more. Constance shall not keep me from paying my last duty to my one only friend!"

"I was sure you would feel like this. The train leaves at noon. Will you accept my escort to Beach Hall? Prue will bear us company. I have already dispatched a messenger to tell her the news, and request her to meet me at the depot."

She staggered to her feet.

"Yes, yes; take me with you. And this is why he did not come to me yesterday! I might have known that nothing, save death, could have kept him from me. What shall I do without him?—how aid my poor father?—how face the bitter future?"

"Do not be unjust," said Leith, with grave reproach; "you have other friends. He was *not* your only one."

She held out her cold little hand. Her eyes shone through tears.

"Forgive me; I deserve your rebuke. Is it time to make ready?"

He glanced at the clock on the mantel.

"Yes. I will wait for you. The judge has not returned?"

"No."

"Doubtless you have heard from him?"

"No."

His face expressed his surprise, but he said nothing. Meg fled to her own room, followed by Sara.

She was overwhelmed with this new and terrible misfortune. Mechanically she suffered the maid to dress her for the journey to Gull Beach. The train would start a few minutes before twelve o'clock. She took a little hand-bag of Russian leather, and carefully placed the letters and journal therein. They must go with her—she could not leave them in this house. While thus engaged, she distinctly heard a step in the corridor. It passed her door once, twice. Sara heard it, also.

"Who is that?" said Meg. An unpleasant thrill ran through all her cold, sorrow-sick young body. "Is Mrs. Maitland up?"

"Lor', no, miss; she can't lift her head from the pillow."

"Is there any visitor in the house?"

"No, miss."

Meg listened. For the third time the step went by her door. She ran and opened it, just in season to catch the glimpse of a male figure vanishing over the threshold of an adjoining chamber.

"A man has entered Mrs. Maitland's room," she said, breathlessly.

"It's the doctor, miss," answered Sara; "tall and stout, wasn't he?"

"I could not see," Meg replied. "He reminded me of—but no, that's impossible! Surely Judge Fortescue has not returned?"

"Returned, miss, and *you* not know it?" said the girl, in amazement. "Lor', I'm sure 'twas the doctor. What hat will you wear? The black one—yes, miss. And when may you be expected back?"

"I cannot tell—to-night, probably."

"Should the judge come while you're away, and ask about you, what will I tell him?"

"That I have gone to the funeral of a very dear friend, Colonel Dysart, of Gull Beach, and that I shall return as soon as possible, for I have business of importance to transact with him."

"Very well, miss."

Meg tied a thick vail over her pale face, took up the precious bag, and went down to Robin Leith. Five minutes later the two had left the house, unseen by any one save Sara.

The latter went back to Miss Grey's room, and was busily employed there, bringing order out of confusion, when the furious ringing of Mrs. Maitland's bell made her jump.

"Dear me!" said the girl, "she hasn't had her chocolate;" and she fled to the kitchen for the tray, pursued all the way by that imperative jingle, jingle.

"She's in a great strait, sure enough," thought Sara, and up the stair she went, as fast as her feet could carry her, bearing the smoking cup of dainty porcelain. Still the bell rang on.

"Beg pardon, ma'am," stammered Sara, as she opened the door; "I quite forgot your chocolate—I was bury in Miss Grey's room——"

She stopped, aghast. At the foot of the bed stood the rigid black figure of the man whom Meg had seen in the corridor—not the doctor, but Judge Fortescue!

His haughty face wore the yellow pallor of a corpse. It was drawn, too, and pinched, as if with fear or anxiety, or perhaps both. His eyes were hollow and blood-shotten. He looked haggard, wild and sinister. Surely something strange had befallen the man! Forty-eight hours had wrought a terrible change in his appearance. Why had he crept, unobserved, and like a thief, into his own house? Sara stared at him blankly, then stammered:

"Lor', sir, I didn't know you had come! I hope nothing's wrong?"

He did not answer. He was clutching the carved woodwork of the bed; his lips moved, yet gave forth no sound. His eyes were fixed upon Mrs. Maitland, who held in her bandaged hands a pillow, the depths of which she seemed to have been searching, for Sara could see a yawning gap in the case.

"Yes," she cried, angrily, "she has found them—the cunning hussy! Letters and book are gone, Gerald. She must have secured them during the fire last night."

Judge Fortescue reeled.

"*My God!*" fell with awful emphasis from his livid lips.

"Put down that chocolate—who wants chocolate?" cried Mrs. Maitland to Sara. "Where is Miss Grey? Send her to me instantly!"

"She has just left the house, ma'am," answered the amazed maid. The next that she knew the porcelain cup had been dashed from her hold. A heavy hand grasped her arm.

XUM

"Whither has she gone? If you love your life, speak!" cried Gerald Fortescue.

The girl writhed in his iron clutch.

"Oh, sir, you hurt me! She's gone to Gull Beach—to the funeral of a friend. She'll soon be back, to transact some business with you. She bade me say this, if you came in her absence."

"Is she *alone?*" he demanded.

"No," answered Sara, trembling under his sinister look. "There's a gentleman with her—she called him Mr. Leith."

"What train was she to take to Gull Beach?"

"The noon one, sir."

* * * * * * * *

At the depot, Meg and Robin Leith found Miss Prue solemnly awaiting their arrival, according to certain instructions which the old spinster had received from her brother. Her wrinkled face was as expressionless as stone, but the disordered state of her bonnet-strings betrayed some mental agitation.

"When that office-boy came with your note, Rob," she said, "you might have knocked me down with a feather. What a sudden death! And to think you should hear of it only by chance—it is really shameful! Plainly, that woman means to keep the colonel's friends from his funeral. I remember the poor man was troubled with heart-disease as long ago as when we lived at Blackhaven."

Through bustle and din the three made their way to the train. Meg took a place beside Miss Prue. Bells were ringing, engines puffing, people scurrying back and forth. As Meg, who occupied the seat next the window, looked listlessly out at the crowd on the platform, she saw, or thought she saw, a tall familiar figure move swiftly by, among the many moving ones, and vanish abruptly from view. She grasped Miss Prue nervously.

"What is it?" said the old spinster.

"I saw a person like—like Judge Fortescue," whispered Meg; "he passed along there in the crowd."

Miss Prue looked forth, but failed to perceive the object of the other's alarm.

"You are nervous and shaken, my dear," she said, soothingly; "the judge is probably miles and miles away. A vail is very deceitful; I could not tell Robin himself through one as thick as yours."

Meg anxiously watched the changing crowd, but nowhere discovered the figure which had startled her so much. Robin Leith, seated at a little distance from the two, had not heard the conversation. Panting and shrieking, the train rumbled out of the depot at last, and started away on the road to Blackhaven.

The day was bright and sunny, with a hint of coming Spring in the cloudless sky and soft south wind. Over miles of barren brown country that was patiently waiting for the Angel of the Resurrection—past thriving towns and smart little hamlets, they went, drawing nearer and nearer to the great sea.

Miss Prue was kind enough to keep silent, and leave Meg to her own thoughts. These were sad enough. She made no outward sign, but with tearless eyes sat and watched the bare landscape whirl by, the glare of the wintry sun on the forsaken fields, and the strange faces collected about the frequent way-stations. How dreary it all was! The bag of Russian leather dropped from her listless hand, and fell to the floor of the car. Meg, absorbed in painful reflections, failed to miss the light burden—unheeded it lay under her feet.

At the end of an hour the train approached drowsy Blackhaven by the sea, slackened speed—stopped. Miss Prue gently touched Meg, and the latter awoke from her miserable reverie, and allowed Robin Leith to assist her from the car.

"I wonder if we can find a carriage here to take us to Beach Hall?" said Miss Prue, looking apprehensively around.

The train rattled, puffed, started forward. At the same instant Meg experienced a disastrous sense of loss. With a wild cry she rushed forward, almost throwing herself under the great wheels.

"The bag!—the bag!" she gasped—"it is in the car!"

Leith seized her with a strong hand, and drew her swiftly back to safety.

"Remain here—I will find it," he said, and promptly leaped upon the moving train, and vanished from her view.

"Oh, goodness me!—how dangerous!" exclaimed Miss Prue, gray with fright. "He will certainly be killed!"

The train turned a curve, and disappeared behind some weather-beaten sheds and piles of yellow lumber. Miss Prue began to weep. Meg stood horrified, holding her very breath.

Several moments passed; then Leith emerged from the shadow of the old sheds, a shade paler than usual, but with the leather bag in his hand.

"Robin!" cried Miss Prue, in mingled wrath and relief; "oh, you dreadful boy! You leaped from the train!"

"I am quite unharmed," he answered, evasively. "'A miss is as good as a mile.'"

"It's a wonder you did not fall under the car, and get crushed to death! There's blood on your forehead—you're surely hurt."

"Not at all. Pray be quiet, Prue—it is nothing."

Hastily he wiped the tell-tale stain away with his handkerchief, and held out the bag to Meg. She, ungrateful creature! was thinking far less of the peril through which he had passed, than of the recovered journal and letters. As she received her treasure, she bent quickly and laid her soft lips to the hand that had restored it—she would have done the same had that hand belonged to a street vagrant. A strange look swept Leith's face.

"For God's sake, don't!" he said, in a stifled voice that had a stern echo in it. "Do you think me more, or less, than a man?"

She drew back in a sort of cold surprise.

"I think you very rash," she answered, "and—very foolish. This bag holds something of great value. I have no words to thank you for its recovery. It was unpardonably careless of me to forget it."

He turned away to look for a carriage. After some delay one was found, and the trio entered it, and rode off to Gull Beach."

The flat sandy road, the pine woods, full of silence and gloom, the low brown marshes, the cold sea, glinting blue and bright through the trees—Meg's eyes roamed eagerly over these familiar, unchanged things.

"At what hour is the funeral?" said Miss Prue to her brother.

"Two o'clock. We shall barely be in time."

Presently they came in sight of the hall, standing solitary and gray in the midst of its guardian firs. As they went up the drive, under the dear old trees, Meg's face was hidden in her vail. She allowed Leith to help her from the carriage; then she crossed a threshold—she stood again in the house from which Constance Dysart had driven her years before.

The place was full of grave, silent people—Colonel Dysart's neighbors, and a few friends from Blackhaven and the immediate vicinity of the hall.

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"What do *they* think of this hasty burial?" Meg said to herself, in bitterness of spirit. "Mrs. Dysart might have kept her husband's remains above ground another day, at least."

She flung back her vail, and glided straight into the darkened room where sat the mourners. Conspicuous among them was Constance, stately and fair, in widow's weeds. At sight of Meg she could not repress an angry start. The intruder swept into the midst of the sombre company, and up to something that stood with glimmering silver ornaments and costly flowers in the deep embrasure of a window—Colonel Dysart's coffin.

There he lay, the father of her childhood—her benefactor, protector, friend. She bent and passionately kissed the cold forehead, the sunken cheek, the marble hands. Thank God that he had died loving her once more, forgiving all her sins! Thank God for that interview under Gerald Fortescue's roof! Her hot tears fell upon the placid face, stamped now with the awful dignity of death—death! that mystery of mysteries, against which we rebel, and strive, and question, and plead, and pray in vain—all in vain.

Most of the little company recognized the colonel's adopted niece, and a faint stir, the exchange of significant looks and whispers, greeted her entrance. But, heedless of the curious eyes of the living, Meg sat down by that dreadful coffin and gave herself up to bitter grief. Her place was there—of all his mourners, none could be more sincere than she.

Presently the deep voice of the clergyman broke the hush of the room. She heard words of faith, hope and consolation, heard Colonel Dysart's death called a mysterious dispensation of Providence, heard the reverend man thank heaven that the dead had been permitted to return to his own land, and die in his own house; heard a solemn prayer for the widow upon whom this awful visitation had fallen like a thunderbolt. In one little moment all the joy of her young life had been snatched away.

"I wonder if that is true?" thought Meg, drearily. "*Does* Constance mourn for him?" and then she looked up involuntarily, and saw the bereaved widow sitting but a few feet distant, robed in the blackest of crape, her face shrouded in her heavy vail, through which, nevertheless, Meg discerned two cold, vindictive, yellowish eyes fixed upon herself with anything but a friendly look. Instinctively she felt that her presence at the colonel's funeral had displeased Constance.

The last word was said. Ashes to ashes now, and dust to dust. As the mourners arose to go out, Meg glided up to the widow, and stretched forth her gloved hand. It was a movement expressive of forgiveness, penitence, and a desire for reconciliation in the mute, cold presence of the dead, and all this Constance Dysart understood.

But she brushed straight by the extended hand, never touching it, never deigning its owner a look. Why should she wish for reconciliation? Her hatred for this girl was as intense as ever. And now she had triumphed. The desire of her heart was gratified. She was a widow, with the best of life still before her, and a handsome fortune, entirely her own.

As she passed out to the carriage she saw Mr. Bond, the Blackhaven lawyer, leaning against the staircase. He had come down to Gull Beach to read the colonel's will. Her heart gave an exultant bound. If any pang of conscience troubled this woman to-day she throttled it resolutely. Just how Colonel Dysart had died, no one in this world, save his widow, could or would ever know. A serious mistake had been made, that was all. No wise person ever holds himself or herself accountable for a mistake.

Leith led Meg to the carriage, and handed Miss Prue to a seat beside her. They would follow the silent sleeper to his long home.

No word was spoken. Slowly the procession moved out under the sighing firs and through the tall gates into the highway. The cemetery was two miles distant from the hall—a solemn, lonely place on a hillside facing the sea. Up an avenue of evergreens the line of vehicles went, and stopped at the new-made grave.

Yea, ashes to ashes and dust to dust! The afternoon sunshine slanted through the trees, and flung its wan, westering glow on the freshly turned sods and the faces both of the living and the dead.

Beside the colonel's last resting-place Meg stood, shivering in the gusts of chill wind that began to blow up from the bay, and listened to the final prayer said over the senseless clay, and heard the frosty earth rattle down on the coffin-lid. Silently Leith supported her. Miss Prue remained in the carriage, patiently waiting. The other mourners soon departed, but Meg still lingered, reluctant to tear herself from the spot. The last clods were flung upon the dead, the sun dipped down behind the trees, the cemetery was now silent. Meg turned to Robin Leith.

"Leave me here a few moments alone," she pleaded.

He promptly retired to the carriage, which stood some yards away in the darkening avenue. Meg sank on her knees beside Colonel Dysart's mound, buried her face in her hands, and prayed.

What was it that aroused her at last? A step in the sere grass, a sound of hoarse breathing. She looked up. At the foot of the grave stood the figure of a man wrapped in a long cloak. Over his brows a soft hat was drawn, and from under its brim a white, tense face and a pair of coal-like eyes met the gaze of the astonished girl.

Was she dreaming? Was that black shape there by the newly-heaped mound illusion, or reality?—a thing earthly, or unearthly? Before she could fully determine, Miss Prue's shrill voice was heard among the trees, and the figure darted back into an adjacent clump of evergreens, and disappeared as if the earth had swallowed it up. Meg stepped across the brown grave, following the track of the baleful shadow.

"Gerald Fortescue!" she cried aloud.

No voice answered. The evergreens shook in the rising wind, dead leaves whirled across the mound, and as Meg, rigid with surprise, stared at the clump of trees which had received the apparition, another figure appeared in the avenue—Robin Leith approached.

"Did you call?" he said.

"No," answered Meg, beginning to tremble.

He drew her hand through his arm.

"Come away, you are shaking with cold. You will get your death here. Prue is greatly worried about you. You *must* come. I cannot allow you to stay longer by this grave."

She clung to him suddenly, shaking not with cold, but terror.

"I have seen a wraith," she gasped.

He looked incredulous.

"The wraith of Gerald Fortescue. It vanished yonder among the trees; or, perhaps, it was my enemy in the flesh."

Without a word Leith plunged into the clump of evergreens. No living thing was there. He looked sharply around. Marble shafts and low brown graves alone met his eyes. He went back and forth, here and there, searching the vicinity thoroughly, but discovered neither Fortescue nor his wraith.

"I think your nerves have played you a trick," he said,

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as he returned to Meg. "Be calm, there is no one here." His quiet, protecting manner reassured her.

"I dare say you are right," she answered; "I am fast becoming a coward. Twice to-day I have fancied the same absurd thing."

They walked away to the carriage and Miss Prue. With a deep sense of relief Meg saw that the old spinster held upon her lap the leather bag, safe and secure.

"Imprudent child!" she cried, at sight of Meg. "I am sure you will contract a galloping consumption from standing so long on the wet, cold ground. Here is an extra wrap, Robin; put it around her—she looks like a ghost."

Leith obeyed. His hand was not altogether steady as he gathered the shawl about the lovely white throat and sloping shoulders, but Meg failed to perceive it. Down the long avenue, in the mournful dying day, they departed from the cemetery.

For some moments the girl did not notice the direction they were taking; then, in astonishment, she cried:

"What! Are you going back to Beach Hall?"

"Yes," answered Leith.

"To Constance? Over Colonel Dysart's coffin she refused to touch my hand."

"I am going back," said Leith, quietly, "to read Colonel Dysart's last will and testament—a document which I wrote for him on the very day of his death. This is the business which brought me to his burial."

CHAPTER XXIII.

AT MIDNIGHT.

FROM the colonel's grave Constance Dysart returned to Beach Hall, to hear the Blackhaven lawyer read her husband's will. She was now a rich, independent, *free* woman. For freedom she had long sighed, and the absence of it had been as poison in her cup of ease and pleasure. Her gilded chain had galled her deeply, but it was broken at last, and now she could forget her past and all the dark things in it, and begin life anew.

Mr. Bond, a little, gray-haired man, was waiting in the dismal drawing-room. He had remained at the house while the mourners followed the dead man to his grave.

"Madam," he said, with some embarrassment, "allow me to speak with you alone."

Constance gave him a surprised look, then flung open the door of her husband's library, and both passed in, beyond the eyes and ears of the curious friends who had returned to the house with the young widow.

The Blackhaven lawyer surveyed her with an apologetic air. She was a fine woman, and he admired her greatly.

"My dear Mrs. Dysart," he said, "I came here to-day to read your husband's last will and testament, but I find that I do not possess that important paper—it is in the hands of another person."

Constance's cold eyes transfixed him like daggers.

"What can you mean?" she demanded.

"There is a later will than the one which I hold. My young friend, Mr. Leith, has brought it down to us today."

Constance stood as if thunderstruck.

"A later will! When—where was it written?"

"In Boston—in the office of Mr. Leith, on the very day that preceded the colonel's sudden death."

"Mr. Bond, can this be true?"

"Without a doubt, madam! Perhaps you may know the reasons that induced your husband to make another will?"

Yes—she knew, and a keen pang of apprehension stabbed her cold, calculating heart. The color fled from her face.

"I hope and trust that nothing has been altered," said Mr. Bond, uneasily. "The colonel loved you—surely he has done right."

Constance was "game." She controlled herself admirably.

"I am confident of it! Where is this man Leith?"

"Not yet returned from the grave. He has Miss Meg in charge."

This looked ominous.

"Ah!" sneered Constance, "he is an old lover of hers. We must wait for him, I suppose."

"I think we must," answered Mr. Bond.

Fifteen minutes later, the carriage which contained the Leiths appeared in the fir-bordered drive. Mr. Bond met the young lawyer at the door, and conducted him to the library, where Constance sat, indignant and contemptuous.

"What is this talk about another will?" she cried, haughtily. "I cannot believe Mr. Bond. My husband settled his affairs at the time of our marriage."

"Pardon, madam," Leith answered, politely; "Colonel Dysart came to my office on the morning preceding his death, and there made a final disposal of his property. I wrote his will, and it was duly signed and witnessed. I have come to Gull Beach to-day to make known its contents. That it is genuine I think you cannot doubt."

Constance swept into the drawing-room, where friends and neighbors had reassembled, all agape with curiosity. In a corner she espied Miss Prue and Meg. One vindictive glance she shot at the latter, then sank into a seat, and braced herself for the worst.

Leith drew forth the momentous document, unfolded it, and, in a clear, business-like voice, began to read:

> "I, Richard Dysart, gentleman, of sound and disposing mind and memory, but mindful of my mortality, do make and publish this my last will and testament, hereby revoking all former will by me at any time heretofore made."

Then followed some small bequests to friends and servants; and then, unto Margaret Grey Harmon, the beloved daughter of his old friend, Philip Harmon, the testator gave, devised and bequeathed his estate known as Beach Hall, to be held by said Margaret, her heirs and assigns for ever. The rest, residue and remainder of his earthly possessions, of what kind and nature soever, was to be equally divided betwixt the aforesaid Margaret Grey Harmon and the wife of the testator, Constance North Dysart. "Said legacy given to my said wife," ran the will, "I hereby declare is intended to be, and is so given to her, in full satisfaction and recompense of, and for her dower and thirds, which she may or can in any wise claim or demand out of my estate."

A silence succeeded. Among the disinterested listeners shrugs and whispers were exchanged. Meg sat dumbfounded. She had not dreamed of anything like this. As for Constance Dysart, her blonde face grew livid. Beach Hall and one-half of his remaining fortune wrested from her—given to her enemy! It was unendurable!

She arose in her long black garments, and glided up to Meg. Her yellowish eyes looked like some angry cat's.

"You have conquered!" she hissed, in a fury—"outwitted me at the very last!"

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Then, with the air of a tragedy queen, she turned and swept out of the midst of the astonished company, up the stair to her own chamber.

Robin Leith advanced, and held out his hand to Meg.

"I congratulate you," he said, with earnest kindness.

Miss Prue kissed her joyfully.

"You now stand under your own roof," she cried, "and need take no thought for the morrow. Bless the man in his grave! I was sure he would provide for you at the last."

Other hands were held out to her; she heard kind words from all sides; then, one by one, the company began to depart. Presently Meg found herself alone with the Leiths.

"We shall not return to Boston to-night," said Miss Prue. "I wish to see some friends of mine in Blackhaven, and Rob has business with Mr. Bond that will detain him until to-morrow. So we have concluded to pass the night there, and go back to the city by a morning train. Come with us, my dear; I promise you a warm welcome from our friends."

Meg was gazing out of the deep window into the whispering firs.

"No," she answered, shaking her head; "I thank you, dear Miss Prue, but I will remain at Beach Hall. I wish once more to pass a night under the roof where I was so long happy with *him*."

"Will it not be very lonely, very sad for you?" said Leith.

"No—oh, no. Constance and the servants are here, and with you and Miss Prue at Blackhaven, I cannot feel lonely."

"Blackhaven is four miles away, and I fear you cannot safely count on the company of Mrs. Dysart—she is evidently determined to repel your friendly advances."

"I shall not trouble her. She is welcome to remain in her own quarters. Oh, Robin," with a sudden change of tone, "did the colonel speak kindly of me that day when he came to your office?"

"More than kindly. He assured me that he loved you tenderly, that he had mourned for you without ceasing. His will is surely a proof of his unchanged affection."

Tears gathered in her great, solemn eyes.

"Yes," she answered, with quivering lips, "and for that reason Beach Hall is dearer to me to-night than ever before. I hope Constance does not feel that she has been robbed."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"She need not—she will still be a rich woman." Then, after a rather anxious pause, "Would it not be better for Prue to remain with you till morning?"

"By no means. I would like to stay here by myself to-night, and to-morrow I will meet you at Blackhaven and go back to town. I must see my father as soon as possible."

He said no more. It was not strange that she should crave a few hours of solitude in this home of her childhood. She allowed Leith to hold her slim, cold hand for a half-moment, embraced Miss Prue affectionately, arranged a meeting for the morning, and then the two, with undisguised reluctance, left Meg in the sombre silence of Beach Hall, and departed for Blackhaven.

Twilight gathered on shore and sea. All alone in the dreary drawing-room, where the smell of funeral flowers still oppressed the air, Meg watched the night fall, and a few stars come out, one by one, in the purple heaven. Suddenly the door opened. She turned, and saw Constance Dysart, in bonnet, shawl and vail. With an air of wrathful scorn she sailed across the threshold.

"Beach Hall is now your property, Miss Harmon," she said; "therefore I must leave it. Nothing could induce me to pass a night under *your* roof. Once I had the supreme pleasure of driving you from this place. Now you, in turn, drive me. Do not offer me your hand—I disdain to touch it; betwixt you and me there can never be anything but hostility."

"Constance," pleaded Meg, gently, "for nunky's sake, let us forgive one another."

Constance made a gesture full of aversion and wrath.

"Never! We were foes years ago, we shall be such till death. You stole from me the only man I ever loved—do you remember?—in this house—Danton Moultrie——"

She could not go on; that name choked her.

"Danton Moultrie," said Meg, calmly, "was the mistake of both our lives, Constance. He is now married, and, believe me, his poor little wife is deserving of sincere pity. Let us not speak of him. Weak, heartless, dishonorable, vacillating—no woman in her proper senses could regret such a lover. Least of all should the widow of Colonel Dysart give him a thought."

Constance's blonde face grew scarlet. This rebuke was too much.

"Colonel Dysart!" she hissed, striking her black-gloved hands together; "the weak dotard! His very name is hateful to me! I could curse him in his grave for giving you the lion's share of that fortune by which I had thought to recompense myself for the misery of the last four years. Would to heaven that he had died a day or a week earlier! I have schemed in vain to injure you, Margaret Harmon; I have hated you in vain; I acknowledge myself foiled, outwitted, beaten in a long fight. Now, I bid you, as I trust, a final farewell. I will never willingly see your face again. My luggage will be sent for in the morning."

With that the door closed sharply. Somewhere in the depths of the fir-trees Meg heard a rumbling of wheels. Constance was gone—gone for ever from Beach Hall.

Meg drew a deep breath. She was decidedly glad that the woman who had repulsed all her efforts at reconciliation and insulted the dear dead colonel had left the house. Its gloom seemed less heavy, its atmosphere lighter and sweeter.

Presently a servant entered the room with lights, one who had loved and served Meg in former days.

"It does me good to see you again in this place, miss," she said. "I'm sure I wish you joy of your new property. Mrs. Dysart has taken herself off to Blackhaven, and her Swiss girl with her; good riddance, say I. Everybody declares that the colonel, poor man, never had an hour's peace after his marriage. Shall I fetch your supper to you here, miss? You look quite worn out."

Meg sat down by the fire and drank a little tea and ate a few morsels of the toast which the woman brought her.

It was a silent, solemn night. The sea beat steadily on the shore, gusts of wind sighed now and then around the windows, mysterious voices murmured in the firs, but that was all.

The servant mended the fire, drew the curtains, turned up the lights and removed the supper.

"I have made your old room ready for you, Miss Meg," she said. "It's mortal lonely here to-night. A burying is dreary business. I've got the shivers myself. Would you like the housekeeper or me—there's but two of us besides the man, and he sleeps in the stable—to sit with you a while?"

No, Meg did not care for company, and so the woman went away and left her.

Oh, strange, sad day, which had robbed her of a friend, and given her a fortune! She sat in a low chair before the fire, with listless hands crossed on her lap, and the red light glancing off her rich hair and lending a false glow to her colorless cheeks. Unpleasant thoughts ran through her head. She began to regret that she had not gone with the Leiths to Blackhaven. Mournfully the wind sighed, dismally the sea complained on the distant sands.

Inside the house a weird and oppressive silence had fallen. The ticking of the clock sounded preternaturally loud, the snapping of the coals made her start and look anxiously around. She fancied that she heard footsteps on the terrace and in the garden. A presentiment of evil was upon Meg—or, rather, she was nervous and tired, and tormented with illusions.

(*To be continued.*)

AN UNAUTHORIZED TABAK'S COLLEGIUM.

The father of Frederick the Great instituted a Tabak's collegium, which his son never could enjoy, and which was rather a riotous affair. These precious youths have set up a similar institution, believing that their worthy pedagogue was not likely to intrude upon their unauthorized doings. Books and lessons are neglected; the youngest of the band, too little to trust with a pipe, consoles himself by dragging his slate along the floor.

In the midst the door opens. The teacher appears more in sorrow than in anger, for his best and most promising pupils are here prominent as evil-doers. Still unsuspicious of his coming, no one sees him but the youngest, who stands in mute amazement.

But the reckoning comes soon and sharp. There will be cries and pain, and sick boys who will find neither indulgence nor compassion.

HUMAN NATURE IN A LOAD OF WOOD.

There is a better, more truthful portrayal of human nature in a load of wood, *i.e.*, in the way it is loaded, than in half the "plays" we see, and for fear that some will not read the signs aright, an unerring guide is given. When the outside of the load is straight body oak, and the inside crooked basswood and elm, you may know the man who loaded it is an honest, confiding soul, who wouldn't cheat his own mother if the old lady watched him too closely. Then there is the load of solid oak—oak clear through, except about sixty cubic feet of daylight which the ingenious owner has incorporated by a fanciful arrangement of the less ethereal element of his load. The business of this man's life is to sell three-quarters for four, and he almost always succeeds. The arrangement of this load indicates rock-bottomed integrity on the part of the owner. There are many other kinds of loads, and the owner never fails to hold the mirror up to his own nature when he piles it on; but we skip them all, except one—a scarce variety it is, and probably always will be. It is composed of good honest wood, and there is just as much of it as the owner claims. This indicates an entire lack of knowledge of the wood business on the part of the owner; but such dense ignorance is seldom exhibited.

ROSE LEGENDS.

In the neighborhood of Jerusalem is a pleasant valley, which still bears the name, "Solomon's Rose-garden"; and where, according to a Mohammedan myth, a compact was made between the wise man and the genii of the morning land, which was written, not in blood, like the bond between Faust and Mephistopheles, nor in gall, like our modern treaties, but with saffron and rose-water, upon the petals of white roses. In Paris, in the sixteenth century, an edict was issued requiring all Jews to wear a rose on their breast as a distinguishing mark. In the Catholic Tyrol, at the present day, betrothed swains are expected to carry a rose during the period of their betrothal, as a warning to young maidens of their engaged state. Roses have played, and still play, an important part in popular usages in other parts of the world. In Germany young girls deck their hair with white roses for their confirmation, their entrance into the world; and when, at the end of life's career, the aged grandmother departs to her eternal rest, a last gift, in the shape of a rose-garland, is laid upon her bier. Julius Cæsar, it is recorded, was fain to hide his baldness, at the age of thirty, with the produce of the Roman rose-gardens, as Anacreon hid the snows of eighty under a wreath of roses. At mid-Lent the Pope sends a golden rose to particular churches or crowned heads whom he designs especially to honor. Martin Luther wore a rose in his girdle. In these instances the rose serves as a symbol of ecclesiastical wisdom. A rose was figured on the headsman's ax of the Noehmgericht. Many orders, fraternities and societies have taken the rose as their badge. The "Rosicrucians" may be instanced. The "Society of the Rose," of Hamburg, an association of learned ladies of the seventeenth century, is a less known example. It was divided into four sections, the Roses, the Lilies, the Violets and the Pinks. The holy Medarius instituted in France the custom of "La Rosiere," by which, in certain localities, a money gift and a crown of roses are bestowed upon the devoutest and most industrious maiden in the commune. The infamous Duke de Chartres established an "Order of the Rose" with a diametrically opposite intention. At Treviso a curious rose-feast is, or was, held annually. A castle was erected with tapestry and silken hangings, and defended by the best-born maidens in the city against the young bachelors; almonds, nutmegs, roses and squirts filled with rose-water being the ammunition freely used on both sides.

FAITHFUL TO THE LAST.

About forty years ago a young seal was taken in Clew Bay, Ireland, and domesticated in a gentleman's house, which was situated on the seashore. It grew apace, became familiar with the servants, and attached to the members of the household. Its habits were innocent and gentle; it played with the children, came at its master's call, and, as the old man described it, was fond as a dog and playful as a kitten.

Daily the seal went out to fish, and, after providing for its own wants, frequently brought in a salmon or a turbot to its master. Its delight in the Summer was to bask in the sun, and in the Winter to lie before the fire, or, if permitted, to creep into the large oven, which, at that time, formed the regular appendage of an Irish kitchen.

For four years the seal had been thus domesticated, when, unfortunately, a disease, called in the country the *crippawn*—a kind of paralytic affection of the limbs which generally ends fatally—attacked some black cattle belonging to the master of the house; some died, others became infected, and the customary cure, produced by changing them to drier pasture, failed.

A wise woman was consulted, and the hag assured the credulous owner that the mortality among his cows was occasioned by his retaining an unclean beast about his habitation—the harmless and amusing seal. It must be

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made way with directly, or the *crippawn* would continue, and her charms be unequal to avert the malady.

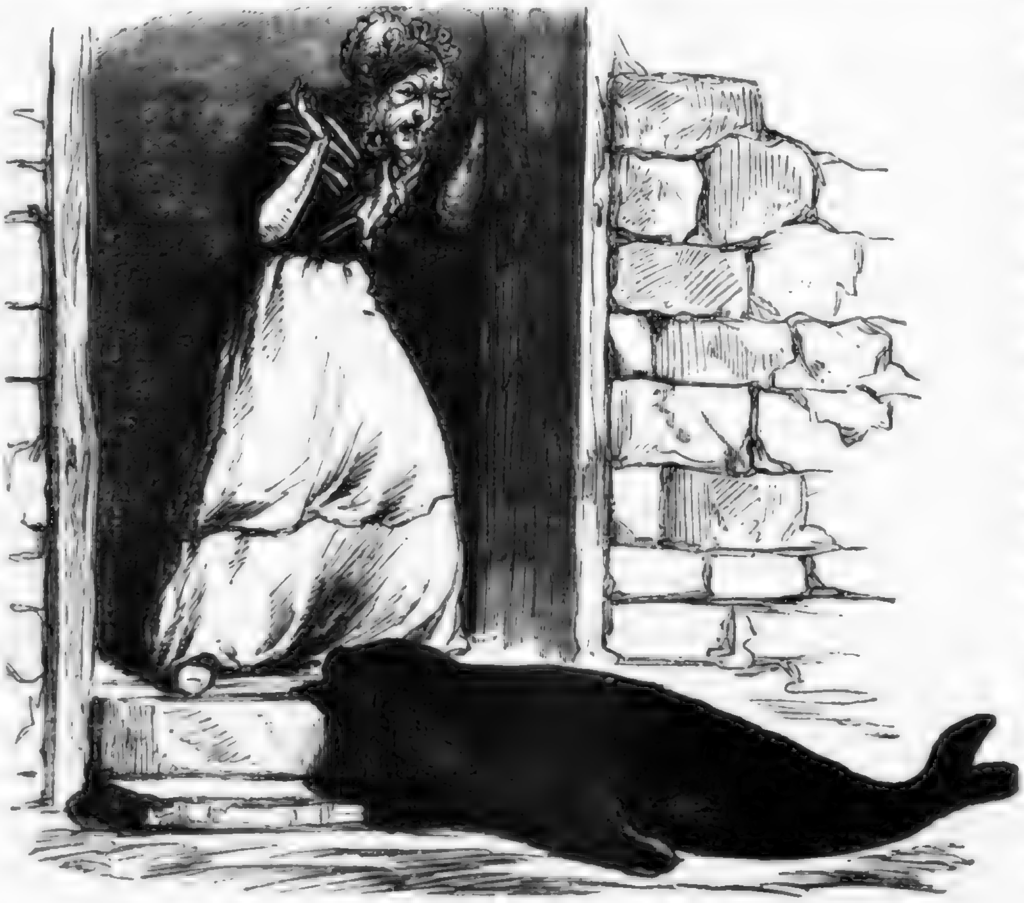
The superstitious wretch consented to the hag's proposal; the seal was put on board a boat, and carried out beyond Clare Island, and there committed to the deep, to manage for himself as he best could.

The boat returned, the family retired to rest; and next morning a servant awakened her master to tell him that the seal was quietly sleeping in the oven. The poor animal over-night had come back to his beloved home, crept through an open window, and took possession of his favorite resting-place.

Next morning another cow was reported to be unwell. The seal must now be finally removed. A Galway fishing-boat was leaving Westport on her return home, and the master undertook to carry off the seal, and not put him overboard until he had gone some leagues beyond Innis Boffin.

It was done; a day and night passed; the second evening came; the servant was raking the fire for the night; something scraped gently at the door—it was, of course, the house-dog; she opened it, and in came the seal!

Wearied with his long and unusual voyage, he testified by a peculiar cry, expressive of pleasure, his delight to find himself at home. Then, stretching himself before the glowing embers of the hearth, he fell into a deep sleep. The master of the house was immediately apprised of this unexpected and unwelcome visit. In the exigency the old dame was awakened and consulted; she averred that it was always unlucky to kill a seal, but suggested that the animal should be deprived of sight, and a third time carried out to sea.



FAITHFUL TO THE LAST.—"WHEN MORNING BROKE, THE DOOR WAS OPENED; THE SEAL WAS THERE, LYING DEAD UPON THE THRESHOLD!"

To this hellish proposition the besotted wretch who owned the house consented, and the affectionate and confiding creature was cruelly robbed of sight, on the hearth for which he had resigned his native element! Next morning, writhing in agony, the mutilated seal was embarked, taken outside Clare Island, and for the last time committed to the waves.

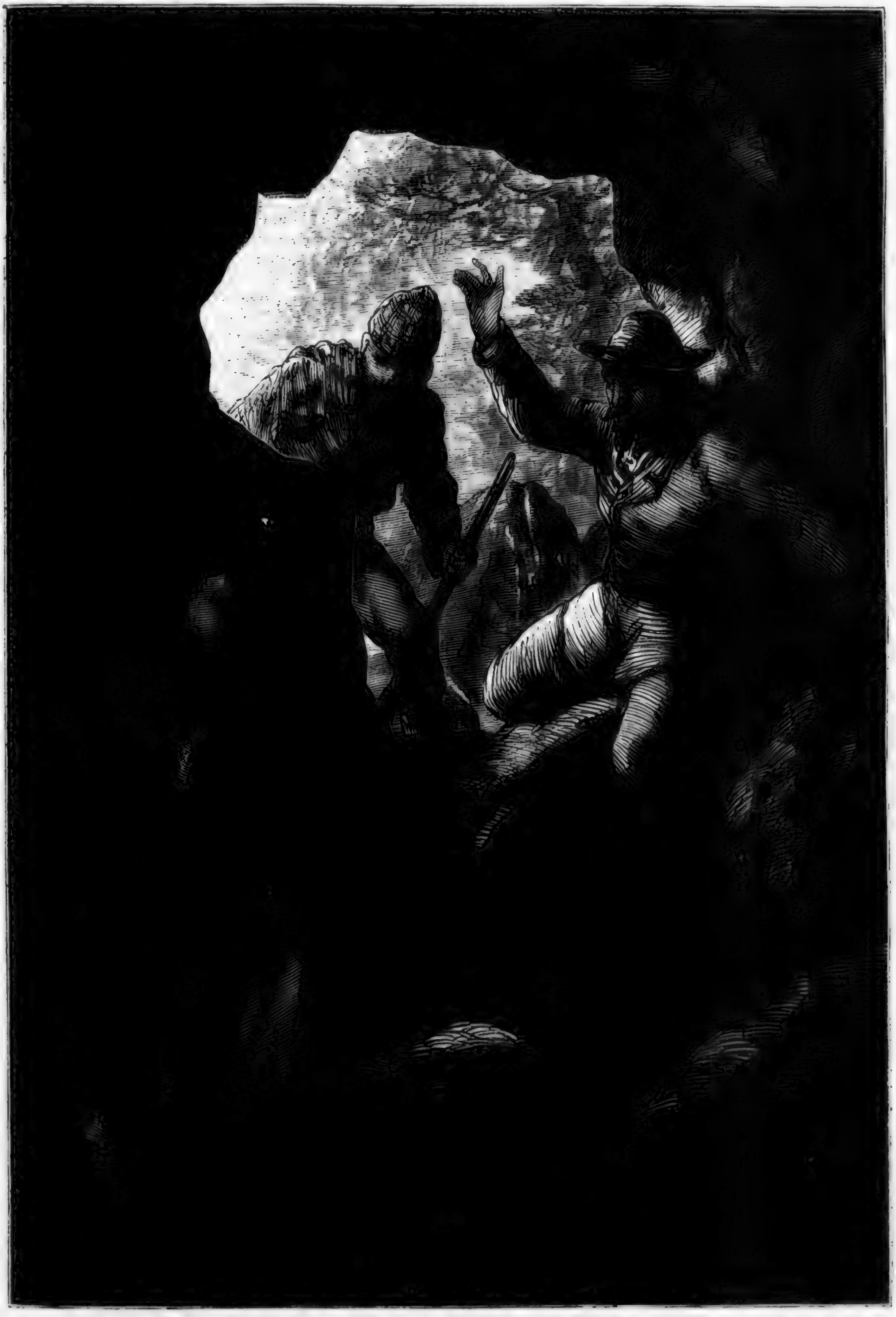
A week passed over, and things became worse instead of better; the cattle of the truculent wretch died fast, and the infernal hag gave him the pleasurable tidings that her arts were useless, and that the destructive visitation upon his cattle exceeded her skill and cure.

On the eighth night after the seal had been devoted to the Atlantic, it blew tremendously. In the pauses of the storm a wailing noise at times was faintly heard at the door; the servants, who slept in the kitchen, concluded that the "banshee" had come to forewarn them of an approaching death, and buried their heads in the bed-coverings.

When morning broke, the door was opened; the seal was there, lying dead upon the threshold! The skeleton of the once plump animal—for, poor beast, it had perished from hunger, being incapacitated, from blindness, to procure its customary food—was buried in a sandhill; and from that moment misfortunes followed the abettors and perpetrators of this inhuman deed. The detestable hag who had denounced the inoffensive seal was, within a twelvemonth, hanged for the murder of her own grandchild. Everything about this devoted house melted away: sheep rotted, cattle died, and the corn was blighted. Of several children, none reached maturity, and the proprietor survived everything he loved or cared for. He died *blind* and miserable.

There is not a stone of that accursed building standing upon another. The property has passed to a family of another name, and the series of incessant calamity that pursued all concerned in this cruel deed is as romantic as true. Moral: Do right, or Retributive Justice will step in and exact compensation for the wrong done.

People proposing to travel abroad would do well to give heed to a little story in London *Truth* of a lady who purchased some diamonds and some "Queen Anne" silverware. It became necessary to have the setting of one of the diamonds changed, and the jeweler's bill called it a "Cape" diamond. An expert, who was consulted, declared that the diamonds were not from Brazil, but from the Cape. The lady then investigated the authenticity of her "Queen Anne" silver. It was soon discovered that either the Hall-mark had been forged, or that it had been taken from smaller articles and introduced into the larger plate. The Goldsmiths' Company threaten to impose a fine of several thousand pounds on the silversmith of whom the lady purchased the silver. As "Queen Anne" silver brings between ten and fifteen dollars an ounce, the profit on the spurious article must be enormous.



THE LADY URQUART.—"CHAINED TO A CHAIR, OR RATHER TO A SEAT OF ROCK, SAT YNCEDELLE DE FORTLIEU, VICOMTESSE DE VERNEUIL, AND LADY OF THE LANDS OF BALCONIE."—SEE NEXT PAGE.

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NEVER AGAIN.

By Adelaide A. Proctor.

"Never again," vow hearts when reunited—
"Never again shall Love be cast aside;
For ever now the shadow has departed;
Nor bitter sorrow, vailed in scornful pride,
Shall feign indifference or affect disdain—
Never, O Love, again, never again!"

"Never again!" so sobs in broken accents
A soul laid prostrate at a holy shrine—
"Once more, once more forgive, O Lord, and pardon:
My wayward life shall bend to love divine,
And never more shall sin its whiteness stain—
Never, O God, again, never again!"

"Never again!" so speaketh one forsaken,
In the blank, desolate passion of despair—
"Never again shall the bright dream I cherished
Delude my heart, for bitter truth is there;
The angel Hope shall still thy cruel pain,
Never again, my heart, never again!"

"Never again!" so speaks the sudden silence,
When round the hearth gathers each well-known face,
But one is missing, and no future presence,
However dear, can fill that vacant place;
For ever shall that burning thought remain—
"Never, beloved, again, never again!"

"Never again!" so—but beyond our hearing—
Ring out far voices fading up the sky;
Never again shall earthly care and sorrow
Weigh down the wings that bear those souls on high;
Listen, O earth, and hear that glorious strain—
"Never, never again, never again!"

THE LADY URQUART.

CHAPTER I.

A SOIRÉE IN PARIS.

NOT long before the terrors of the fearful Commune began, I, Hubert Duncan, on the staff of the —— as local correspondent, had occasion to attend a *soirée* at the house of D——, the celebrated artist.

I had scarcely entered the well-filled rooms ere my eyes fastened themselves, as if by fascination, on the face of a lady upon whom each and all seemed to endeavor to bestow not only attention, but a kind of solicitous care, and about whose chair were grouped many of the great D——'s guests.

This surprised me, for in Paris under the Empire—Second, of course—every one had a *nonchalant* bearing. Nothing but fame, extraordinary beauty—or hideousness—immense wealth, or great eccentricity, excited more than momentary remark.

Who could this lady be, about whose chair *savans*, artists, belles and beaux stood with an air of affectionate interest?

She appeared about twenty-five. But a more *joyless* face I never looked at.

I inwardly remarked, when gazing at her, that even the *opéra bouffe* would not be likely to excite a smile on that face. The traces of some fearful past were upon it, but not the look *of guilt*. No; sad as it was, that was an innocent countenance.

The eyes alone might be commented upon as beautiful. The features were emaciated to a degree that impaired their beauty of outline, and gave them an unnatural sharpness. The form was almost diaphanous, and, in its garb of white, had a weird look.

As I gazed, I remembered a marble angel of the Byzantine period that I had seen many years before—by moonlight—cold, spiritual, unearthly and unutterably sad.

Greatly interested, and the more so from the perfect quietude with which the white-robed lady received the attentions of the beauties and the magnates about her, I finally demanded of C——, the sculptor, the meaning of it all.

"Who is she?" questioned I.

"I'll tell you some other time," replied C——. "Come and smoke a cigar in my studio. Queer business, I assure you," added he, looking at the object of our comments. "Fate, I suppose, fate!"

Next day, awake alike to the honor of an invitation from C——, the chance of beholding the wonders and beauties of his studio, and the merits of a *new* story, I found myself, at the hour the sculptor had mentioned, on the steps of his luxurious house—a mansion worthy of a sybarite. *Entre nous*, my reader, there's a little of that sort of thing about the celebrated C——.

I gazed at the busts around me, and finally came to one which represented what I supposed to be an ideal "Spring."

"Ah! you like my 'Printemps'?" said C——, noting how entranced I stood.

"*C'est quelque chose de divin,*" replied I, still lost in admiration.

"*Eh bien, mon cher,*" said C——, quietly, "that is the lady you saw last night——"

Here I exclaimed:

"What!"

And C—— quietly added:

"As she was five years ago."

It may be imagined that my already great interest increased, and I drew my chair close to C——, who was at work on wet clay, demanding the story of the pale lady.

"It's rather *sensational*," said C——, before beginning. "Like that sort of thing—eh?"

"*Anything* for novelty!" gasped I.

At this C—— arose, called for coffee, laid two packages of cigarettes—he knows my little weakness—on a silver salver before us, and plunged into the following recital:

CHAPTER II.

A SCOTCH LAIRD'S "HAME."

"Five years ago," began C——, "the most beautiful woman in Paris was Yncedelle de Fortlieu, Vicomtesse de Verneuil.

"Everybody said she ought to marry well. She was celebrated not only for the rare perfection of feature which you will observe in the 'Spring,' but for her long and lustrous black hair—a wonder in itself, for it trailed upon the ground—and hands and feet so perfect that, although the favor was never granted me, I have begged, ere now, that I might be permitted to model them.

"Nobody was surprised, except myself, when Yncedelle de Fortlieu's marriage to a Scotch nobleman, of great wealth and rare personal beauty, was announced.

"The Laird of B—— was a man to attract any woman. But I knew that Mademoiselle de Fortlieu loved another, and that this other was Henry de la Porliere, a gentleman of rank from Brittany, and *écuyer* to the Empress.

"Had the heart of the young vicomtesse been free, there appeared no earthly reason why Lord Urquart should not win it. The Laird of B—— was a far more handsome man—save to the eyes of her who loved the latter—than Henri de la Porliere.

"Had I been a woman, and in the place of the fair young vicomtesse, I should have made a virtue of necessity—in this case represented by a stern father and a heartless stepmother—and transferred my affections to the Scotch laird, with 'muckle guld' and lands of wide, sweeping acres. But women don't seem to be able to transfer their hearts—poor things!—as *we* do."

"But she married the 'maun with the sack o' siller,'" said I, "and broke the heart of the 'puir barley miller'—in other words, of De la Porliere?"

"Yes," reluctantly added C——, "she obeyed her parents, and a few days after the first announcement of the marriage, the wedding took place. The young laird, it was averred, was impatient.

"The laird's estates in Scotland lay, it was said, in an exceedingly wild, weird spot, and I remember feeling greatly gratified when his bride gave me, before leaving Paris, an invitation to visit the lands of B——.

"Though not a painter, I love wild scenery, and I have found it, ere now, vastly suggestive. I modeled my 'Titan' after a season of mountain-ranging and Rhine-contemplation. That Brocken is a great thing, I assure you! Before long, said I to myself, I'll go to Scotland, and find the lands of B——.

"But years passed by. I had become so engrossed in my not unremunerative efforts" (C—— is worth millions, my reader, let me remark in parenthesis), "and season after season passed, and always found me elsewhere than in Scotland.

"At last, however, I found a little leisure, and departed. After traveling some time I came to B——. Do you know Scotland, Duncan?"

"Not well," replied I. "I've seen a little of it—not much."

"Well, I must say that the scenery would have repaid a more fastidious man than I am. It was grand!

"The River Auldgrande, after pursuing a winding course through the mountainous parish of Kiltearn for about six miles, falls into the upper part of the firth of Cromarty. For a considerable distance it runs through a precipitous gulf of great depth, and the sides approach each other so near that herd-boys have been known to climb across on the trees, which, jutting out on either side, intwine their branches athwart the centre. In many places the river is wholly invisible; its voice, however, is lifted up at all times in a wild, sepulchral wailing that seems the lament of an imprisoned spirit. In one part there is a bridge of undressed logs across the chasm; and here the observer, if he *can* look down—few have the courage—can behold a sight equally awful and astounding.

"The wildness of the steep, rugged rocks; the gloomy horror of the caverns and cliffs, inaccessible to mortal tread, and where the genial rays of the sun have never penetrated; the waterfalls, which are heard pouring down in different places in the precipice, with sounds which vary in proportion to their distance; the hoarse and hollow murmurings of the river, which runs at the depth of one hundred and thirty feet below the surface of the earth; the fine groves of pines, which majestically climb the sides of a beautiful eminence that rises immediately from the brink of the chasm—all these cannot be contemplated without wonder and delight.

"The house and lands of B——, a beautiful property, lie within a short ride of the chasm.

"Thither I rode.

"Arrived at the castle, I inquired for its lord and lady.

"A gloomy fellow enough played the part of seneschal, and abruptly informed me that Lord Urquart, 'did not see visitors, that Lady Urquart had been *dead for the last six months*, and that he could not do more than give me and my horse a meal, for fear,' he added, 'of offending the laird.'

"I cannot account, my dear Duncan," resumed C——, "for the strange feeling that took possession of me at this intelligence. I knew that the old Count and Countess of Verneuil had heard nothing, a few weeks before, of their daughter's death. And here this old servitor informed me that *six months* had elapsed since it had taken place.

"Next day I took my gun and set forth with a vague idea of shooting birds, but also with a determination, by no means vague, to learn more of the Laird of B——. When I met the first villager that appeared on my pathway—I ought here to state that I did not accept a mouthful at the laird's abode—I began to question him.

"And from him I learned what my Parisian friends and the family of De la Porliere quite ignored—namely, that he had visited the lands of B——, and the laird's house, three months before, and that a little more than three weeks after his appearance at B—— the laird had fought a duel with him, *and killed him.*

"The villager also informed me that though the old retainer—Hugh Stevens he called him—and the laird had both given out that the lady of B—— was dead, '*an' in her grave*,' no one had witnessed the funeral ceremonies, if there had been any, and none had seen her burial-place.

"'The devil,' the villager informed me, '*had a grip on the laird's shoulder*,' and many conjectures had been and still were made as to the fate of the fair wife of the 'strange, wild maun,' as Lord Urquart was said to have become.

"I shot nothing that day.

"I wandered near the horrible but beautiful spot I have described, and, looking at its horror and its beauty, I said to myself that it was no strange thing that those who dwelt among surroundings so 'uncanny' should have a life, and perhaps *a fate*, differing from that of the many. But I determined to know more.

CHAPTER III.

C—— A KNIGHT-ERRANT.

"Next morning I set forth again.

"I believe in presentiments and warnings, and all that kind of thing. Why, Duncan, the night before my 'Psyche' fell and was broken to pieces I dreamed that it *did* fall."

"I lean a little that way myself," admitted I.

"The first person whom I met," resumed C——, "was my old villager of the evening before. Removing his cap with a respectful salutation, he asked if he might be permitted to talk with me.

"Of course, I assented with alacrity.

"Many a wild legend he related, and among others, the 'auld, auld' tradition of the 'Lady of Balconie, the ancestress of the laird.'

"I must relate it, as it was the 'auld maun's' telling it to me that led to the grand *dénouement*, of which, by-the-by, *I* am the hero.

"It was said, he informed me, that two centuries before, the proprietor of Balconie, the ancestor of Lord Urquart, had married a lady of very peculiar and eccentric habits. She was regarded by the inhabitants of the Highlands with mingled suspicion and terror.

"She spent her time, did this weird 'ladye,' in spots where no human being would, of course, remain or go alone. Solitary rambles about the fearful Auldgrande,

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which I have described, engrossed the greater part of her time.

"Suddenly she seemed to attach herself to a young Highland girl, one of her own maids. Yet the dread and suspicion that had attached themselves to her; the species of strange sinking of the vital powers that came to one and all with her appearance; the feeling as if in the presence of a creature from another world—these did not die away.

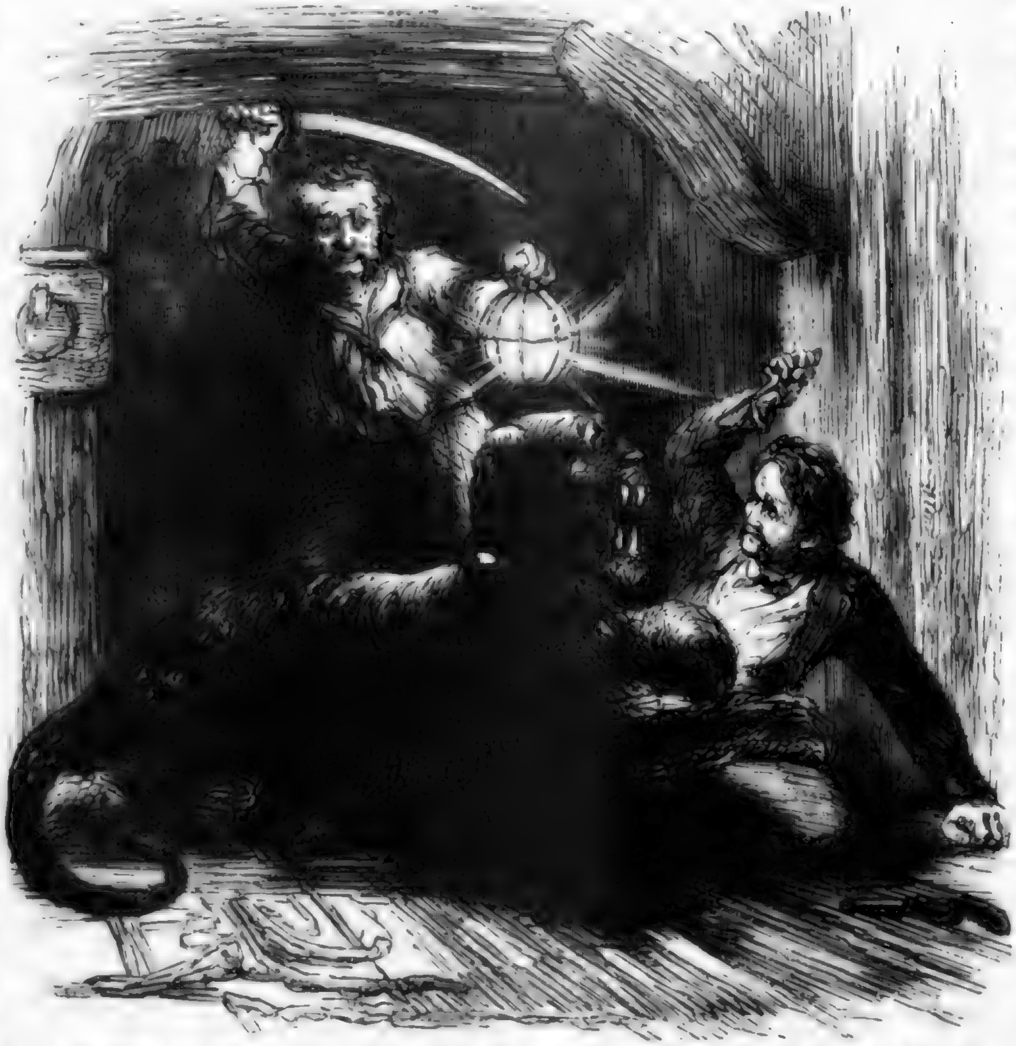
"At last, after spending a whole day with the innocent object of her preference—a preference which made the girl very melancholy—she accompanied her to the banks of the Auldgrande.

"They came near the chasm just at sunset. All beneath was dark as midnight.

"'Let us approach nearer the edge,' said the lady, speaking for the first time since she had left the house.

"'Not any nearer, madame,' replied her terrified companion; 'the sun is almost set, and fearful sights meet the eye in the gully after nightfall.'

"'Oh, nonsense!' replied the lady. 'Come! I will show you a path which leads to the water. It is the finest sight in the world. I have seen it a thousand times, and must see it again to-night. Come!' continued she, grasping the girl by the arm; 'I desire it much, and so down we must go. Come, I say—come!'



A MYSTERY OF THE SEA.—"AS THE TERRIBLE ANIMAL BORE HIM TO THE FLOOR, HE DREW HIS DAGGER, AND STABBED HIM AGAIN AND AGAIN."—SEE PAGE 87.

"'No, lady!' exclaimed the girl, almost dead with terror, and startled by the fiendish expression of mingled anger and terror on her strange companion's face; 'I shall swoon and fall over!'

"'Nay, lost wretch, there is no escape!' cried the lady, her voice rising to a hideous scream, as, with a strength strangely unlike what might have been expected from her delicate form, she dragged the girl, despite her cries and struggles, toward the chasm.

"'Suffer me, madame, to accompany you,' said a hoarse, masculine voice behind her; 'your surety, you know, must be a *willing* one.'

"A dark-looking man, clad in green garments, suddenly stood beside the pair; and the lady, quitting her hold of the young maiden with an expression of mute anguish and despair, suffered the stranger to lead her toward the abyss. Turning as she reached the precipice, she detached from her girdle a bunch of household keys, and, after what seemed to be a farewell look at the sinking sun, flung them up the bank toward the girl. As she did so, she vanished behind the nearer edge of the gulf. The keys, in falling, struck a granite boulder, and left an impression, which, at this stage of his story, the old villager, as we had neared the chasm, pointed out to me.

"The girl," continued he, "remained rooted to the spot in mute amazement.

"On returning home, and telling her horrible story, the husband of the lady, with all the males of the household, rushed toward the chasm. Its perilous edge became alive with torches, and loud cries, to summon the lost lady to make known her whereabouts, resounded through the darkness. But the search proved vain. The impress of the keys remained to bear out the young girl's words; a faint line marked the mold of the precipice lower down, but that was all.

The river at this point is hidden by a projecting crag, but could be heard fretting and growling over the pointed rock, like a lion in its lair.

"They listened, that anxious party, and as they thought of the lady, they shuddered.

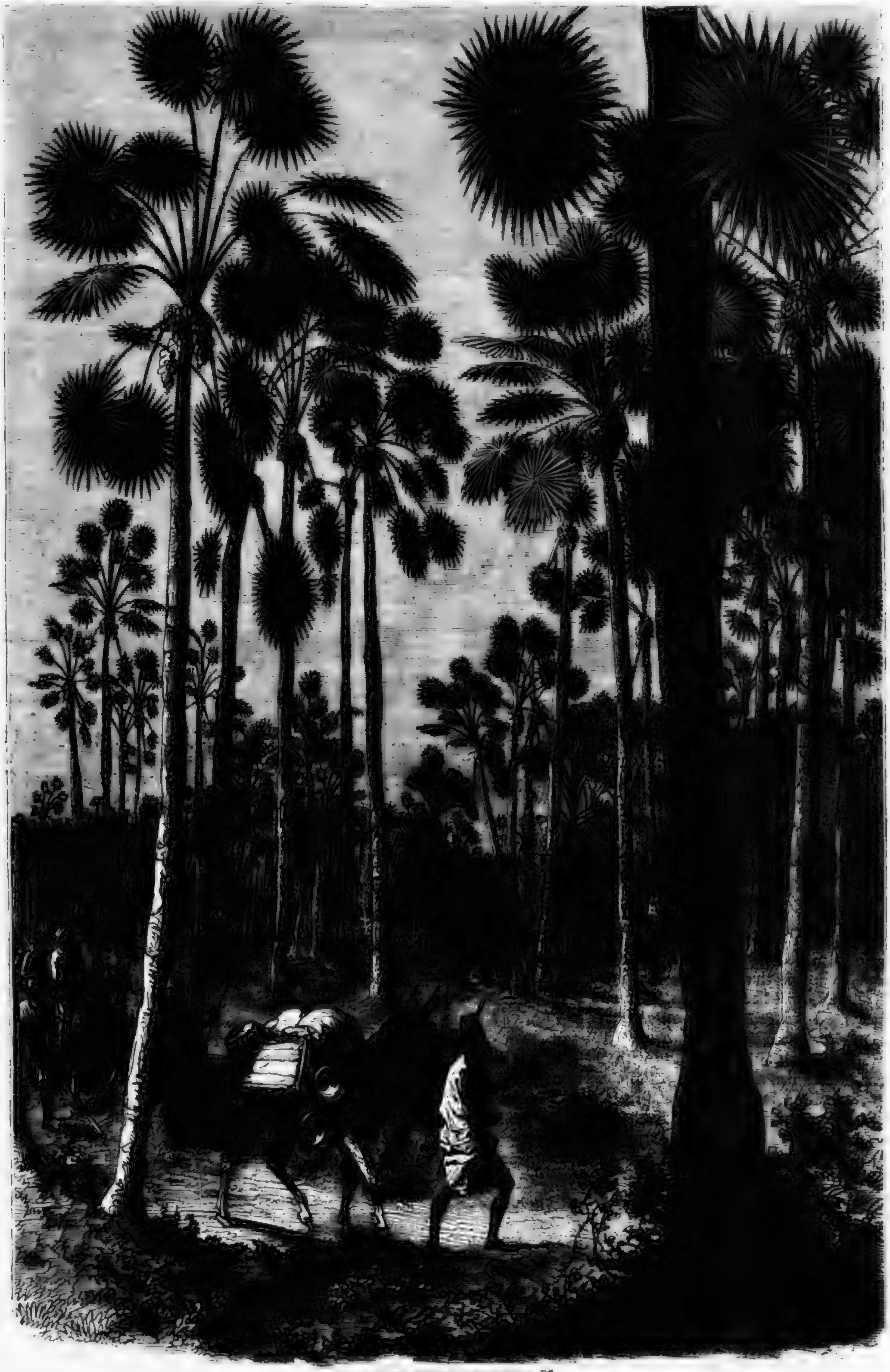
"Days, and months, and years passed.

"At last, when ten long years had gone by, an old Highlander, one Donald, who was servant to a maiden lady who lived near the Auldgrande, was engaged one day in fishing in the river, a little space below where it emerges from the chasm.

"'Are you quite sure,' asked his mistress, when he returned, 'that this is all your day's fishing? Have you no more?'

"Now, old Donald had hidden some fish behind a bush, for his aged mother, who lived near, but he replied: '*Devil a one!*'

"After the maiden lady's back was turned, he stole back to the river, and looked for the hidden fish. None remained, but a few scales upon the grass indicated that some animal had passed along the mold, in the direction of the abyss.



IN A PALM GROVE.—SEE PAGE 86.

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"Brave Donald followed the track. *Of this track I will tell you more before I close.* Let me say here that it terminated, after he had met much peril, in an immense cavern.

"As he entered, two gigantic dogs, who had been sleeping on each side of the chasm, rose lazily from their beds, and yawning as they lay down again, they turned their slow and awful eyes to his face. A little further on, there was a chair and a table of iron, much corroded by the damps of the cavern. Donald's fish, and a large mass of leaven, prepared for baking, lay on the table. In the chair sat the 'Ladye of Balconie.'

"'Oh, Donald!' exclaimed the lady, 'what brings you here?'

"'I come in quest of my fish,' answered Donald. 'But, oh, lady! what *keeps* you here? Come away with me, and you will be Ladye of Balconie yet.'

"'No,' replied she; 'that day is past. I am fixed to this seat, and all the Highlands could not move me.'

"Donald looked at the iron chair. Its enormous legs rose direct out of the solid rock, as if growing out of it; and a thick iron chain, red with rust, that lay under it, communicated with a strong ring, and was fastened to one of the lady's ankles.

"'Besides,' added the lady, 'look at these dogs. Oh! why have you come here? The fish you denied to your mistress *in the name of my jailer*. But how are *you* to escape?'

"''Deed, madame,' said he, 'I dinna weel ken. I maun first durk the twa tykes, I'm thinkin'.'

"'No,' replied the lady; 'there's but one way—be on the alert!'

"She laid hold of the mass of leaven upon the table and flung it to the dogs, who sprang upon it, while Donald escaped.

"Since then the Lady of Balconie was never seen or heard of more, though sought for long."

"But how could any one reach the cavern?" demanded I, not wishing to appear to doubt the old villager's story.

"I dinna ken," answered he, in old Donald's words, and shaking his head.

"And as he spoke he left me.

"But I fell *to thinking*.

CHAPTER IV.

YNCEDELLE, LADY URQUART.

"And the result of my thinking," added C——, "was a resolve, which was, perhaps, made stronger by a dream I had—a dream that certainly arose from the hearing of the villager's wild story, the most fearful of the old Scotch legends. *I dreamed that I found the track to the cavern, and that in the cavern I found—a woman!*

"Next day, gun in hand, and with old Reuben, the villager, beside me, I set forth for the chasm once more.

"'Yours is a brave heart,' said the old man to me, when I told him that in my dream I had seen the face of the lost Yncedelle, the Lady Urquart.

"I now, in obedience to the memory of my dream, took a track winding over grass and stone, along the edge of the River Auldgrande. The channel narrowed as we proceeded; the precipices on either side beetled in some places so high over our heads as to shut out the sky, and receded in others so that we could catch a glimpse of it through leaves and bushes. From the gloom of the place we thought we had lost the track, and, I admit, we were on the eve of turning back in terror, when, at the abrupt angle of the rock, we found ourselves facing *an immense cavern*."

"Well!" cried I, quite breathless, in my eagerness to hear *what else* C—— could possibly have to tell.

"Well, *mon cher*, I think I had better stop now," said the sculptor, "for I no longer expect to be believed."

"No, no! Go on!"

"You insist? Well, *chained to a chair, or rather to a seat of rock*, the existence of which probably gave rise to the legend I have related, as I had it from old Reuben Lyle, *sat Yncedelle de Fortlieu, Vicomtesse de Verneuil*, and lady of the lands of Balconie!"

I stared at the sculptor in amazement.

"I speak in sober earnest," he replied.

"Well, *why* was it all?" asked I.

"Simply because of this: *Urquart was mad.* He imagined that Yncedelle had deceived him with Henri de la Porliere. The duel was more a murder than a duel, when put to proof, for the neighbors told the cruel facts of fire exchanged *across a narrow table* in his ancestral halls. After this, with the memory of the legendary—so many thought, but *he* knew really existing—cavern in his mind, the laird had, for six long months, kept Lady Urquart a prisoner there, and himself carried to her, in this horrible, this maddening solitude, the scanty food by which he kept her, by a refinement of cruelty, alive."

"No wonder that the lady looks as though she could never smile again."

"There is one detail which I did not mention," added C——; "it is this: You may have noticed her wide golden bracelets, worn for this reason: the irons about her wrists had *eaten in* so that the perfect hands, that in her bright girlhood I had humbly begged to model, are marked, as well as her delicate wrists, with indelible scars."

"And what became of the wicked *premier rôle* in this strange affair?" asked I.

"He is where he ought to have been before he was ever suffered to marry Yncedelle de Fortlieu—*in an insane asylum*."

"How is it that his true condition was not suspected?" demanded I.

"That, to my mind, is one of the worst features of the case. Madame de Fortlieu was, in point of fact, only the stepmother of the lovely Yncedelle. The old count had married her *en secondes noces*, and she hated her stepdaughter. The unnatural parent yearned for the laird's wealth, and doomed his daughter, though I will never believe that he would have wedded her voluntarily to madness."

"That is a wasted life," muttered I, as C—— was about to cover the wet clay, out of which, while talking, he had made a strangely beautiful face. "By-the-by, what a sweet face you have made of this! It reminds me of the 'puir ladye,' as old Reuben called her, as she looks now."

"Yes," said C——, "I meant that it should. I shall call it a 'Young Christian Slave doomed to the Arena.' And," added he, as we set out for a walk on the boulevard, "there's one comfort as to Lady Urquart's wasted life—*it won't last long;* the doctors say she is consumptive."

But I presume the reader has guessed, as I did, that the celebrated sculptor *loved the Lady Urquart*.

IN A PALM GROVE.

Rain is rare in the Sahara; it falls in Winter, and stimulates into a newly awakened life the vegetation which has been drained of vigor by a Summer sun. Sometimes it descends in torrents, but these torrents, like our Summer showers, are of briefest duration. At

Tougourt and Ouraegla whole years pass by without a drop of rain. Does not the reader understand, then, the gratefulness of the Arab toward a tree which can derive its nourishment from the burning sand, the scarcely less burning airs of heaven, and the brackish waters beneath the soil which are fatal to all other kinds of vegetation—which retains its verdure fresh in the glare of a pitiless sun—which resists successfully the winds that bow to the ground its flexible stem—which provides him with beams and covering for his tent, cordage for the harness of his horses and camels, fruit to satisfy his hunger and wine to quench his thirst—which is, moreover, "a thing of beauty," and gladsome to the eye?

"Those groups of lovely date-trees, bending
Languidly their leaf-crowned heads,
Like youthful maids, when sleep descending
Warns them to their silken beds."

What the vine is to the Italian, the oak to the Englishman, the cocoanut-tree to the Polynesian, is the date-palm to the Arab. And more—far more. This single tree has peopled the desert. A civilization, rudimentary compared with that of the West, sufficiently advanced if you contrast it with that of the Malay or the South Sea Islander, finds in it its standing-point, its centre, its support. And without it the tribes of the Sahara would cease to be.

The wealth of an oasis is computed by the number of its palm-trees. All of them, however, are not fruitful; for the date is diœcious. It has its males and its females. The males have flowers furnished with stamens only, and form a closed-up, folded, grape-like ball, previous to the ripening of the pollen in an envelope called the spathe. The females, on the contrary, bear clusters of fruit also wrapped up in a spathe, but incapable of development until fecundated by the pollen or dust of the stamens. To multiply the date-trees, the Arabs do not sow the kernels of the fruits, though they germinate with extreme facility, for it is impossible to tell beforehand of what sex the tree will be; they prefer, therefore, to detach a slip from the trunk of a female tree, and this becomes fruitful at the expiry of eight years.

The male trees blossom, says Mr. Tristram, in the month of March, and about the same time the case containing the female buds begins to open. To impregnate these, a bunch of male flowers is carefully inserted and fastened in the calyx. Toward the beginning of July, when the fruit begins to swell, the bunches are tied to the neighboring branches.

The dates are ripe in October, at which time any premature rain is fatal to the crop, though the *roots* require a daily watering. Not less injurious are east winds in March and April. The tree when it begins to bear is about seven feet high. Each year the lowest ring of leaves falls off, so that the age of a palm may be roughly computed from the notches on its stem. Its fruit begins to decline after a century, and the tree is then cut down for building purposes; but it will live for at least a couple of hundred years.

Some trees produce as many as twenty bunches; but the average in a favorable season is from eight to ten bunches, each weighing from twelve to twenty pounds. Before the dates ripen, each proprietor is bound to set apart one tree in his garden, whose fruit is consecrated for the service of the mosque and the use of the poor.

From the juice of the date the Arab obtains a sweet fermented liquor, called *laguni*, of which he is inordinately fond. He makes an incision in the top of the tree, taking care to strike home to the centre. A funnel is attached, by which the sap flows into a vessel at the rate of about three quarts every morning for ten to sixteen days. The incision requires to be opened afresh daily.

The cabbage, or soft pith and young unfolded leaves at the summit of the stem, in taste approaching the chestnut, is also eaten, but only when the tree has fallen or been felled, as the loss of its crown will invariably destroy it.

There are fifteen varieties of dates, of which the *dghel-nour* is considered the best for keeping, and three other kinds are preferred fresh.

The crest of the full-grown tree rises about fifty feet above the ground. The air circulates freely under the leafy canopy formed by their interlacing branches, but the sun's rays do not penetrate. Shade, air, and water—these three elements permit the most varied cultivation in the palm-gardens, despite the scorching heats of Summer.

A MYSTERY OF THE SEA.

A TROPICAL night on the Pacific. The sky is studded with stars, which are mirrored in the vast deep beneath. There is just enough air to keep the *Dolphin* moving at a quiet rate, and the passengers are gathered on deck to enjoy the matchless evening.

A short distance away stand two lovers—Edmund Prescott and Florence Herndon—looking out upon the ocean, and meditating and conversing upon the scene.

"How different this sky from our own American firmament!" remarked the latter, after a pause. "I can scarcely recognize my favorite constellation. The Southern Cross is beautiful, but then I miss the others. Ursa Major has disappeared, and as for the Minor Bear, scarce a star of him is visible."

At this observation, which was intended for no particular ears, Adolphus Fitzgibbons aroused himself.

"Aw—what's that, Miss Herndon?—aw—have you seen *bears* at sea?"

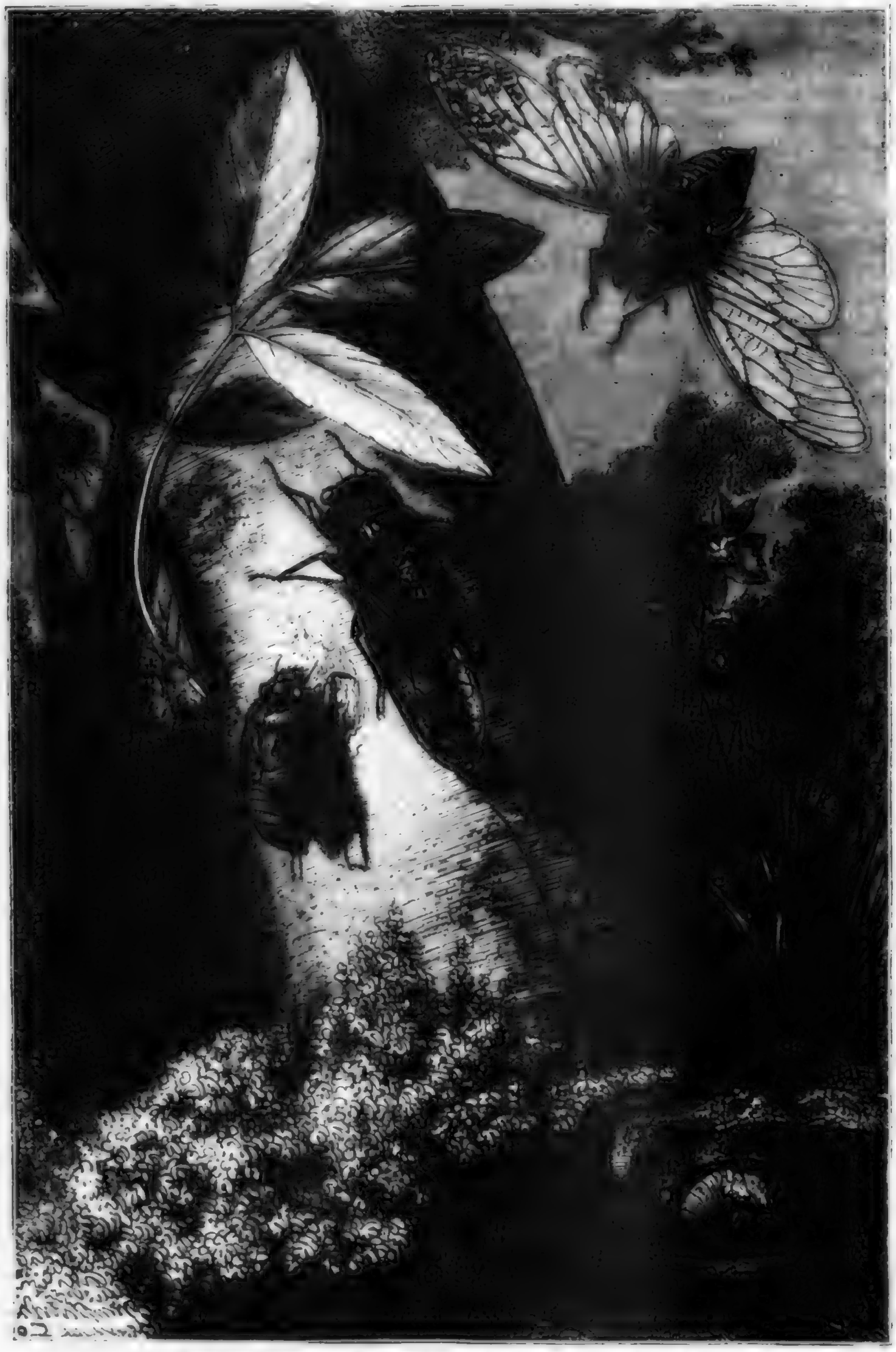
"Yes, and monkeys, too!" was the quick but good-natured reply.

All of us laughed, while Fitzgibbons looked silly, then grinned hugely, then seemed to meditate some scathing witticism, then concluded he wouldn't, and stretched out upon his side, with his back toward the lovers, and pretended to, or really did, fall asleep within the next fifteen minutes.

I was reclining on the deck, about a dozen feet from where the lovers stood—not with any intention of listening to their words, but simply because I had taken my position first, and was too languid to change it. I had been an invalid for years, and was now recovering from a severe spell of sickness.

I was lazily drawing at my Havana, puffing the thin, fragrant smoke from my mouth without removing the cigar, and gazing upward at the brilliant stars as they slowly sailed overhead. I was in that delicious dreamy state, half asleep and half awake, hearing only the murmur of the voices around me as one hears the faint sound of a distant waterfall.

I presume I had lain thus for fully an hour, and my cigar had burned almost to my mouth, while the long column of ashes was still unbroken, when something struck my ear like the sound of a bell. It was not until I had heard it several times that it seemed really to affect my senses.



THE METAMORPHOSES OF THE CICADA OR LOCUST.—SEE PAGE 92.

All at once I gave a start, the ashes dropped upon my bosom, and I arose to a sitting position, and gazed around me.

"Hark!" said I; "didn't you hear that bell?"

"Just what I have been trying to make Edmund believe!" laughed Florence Herndon; "he persisted in not believing it."

"Listen!" said I, raising my hand; and immediately there fell a death-like silence.

And while thus intently listening, there came across the sea, faint but distinct, the soft, distant sound of a bell. We scarcely breathed for a minute, and the strange, solemn sound was repeated at regular intervals, as if swung by the hand of some exhausted sufferer, or tolled by the swell of the ocean.

The captain by this time had approached, and stood in the attitude of attention.

"We must be near the land?" I ventured, rather in the form of an inquiry than in that of an assertion.

"No, sir," responded the captain; "the nearest island is a good eight hundred miles away, and *this* doesn't come from there, I reckon."

"What can it be?" asked several, in the same breath.

"The sound comes from that direction," said Florence Herndon, pointing toward the equator.

"Perhaps it is on board a ship?" I again ventured.

"Don't think it is," replied the captain, with a shake of the head.

"What *can* it be?" asked Florence.

To this no one ventured a reply for several moments. In the meantime, the tolling of the bell had become quite distinct, and Adolphus Fitzgibbons gave a yawn, a groan, a kick, and a woke.

"Aw—yes—aw—I was about to suggest—aw—that the tea-bell should ring—aw—aw!" he stammered, confusedly rising to his feet, and pitching back and forth; then, seeing us all in the attitude of attention: "What—aw—the dooce is the matter?"

"*It's the Bell of Doom!*" exclaimed Backstay Bob, a tall, scarred sailor, from his position at the wheel.

"Pshaw! you're too childish!" replied the captain. "Whatever it is, we are rapidly approaching it, for notice how much louder it sounds."

Such was the case. The bell was now heard clear and distinct to the south, and was approaching every moment. Shortly after, the captain took his night-glass and gazed long and intently in that direction. When he lowered it, he said:

"I can just discover a dark body rising and falling on the waves, but nothing more. Backstay Bob, you have got the best eyesight of any one on board. See what you can make of it."

Bob resigned his place at the wheel to one of the men, and came forward and took the glass. He went to the gunwale, and leaning over, held it to his eye for several minutes without speaking, and, to all appearance, without breathing, while we awaited his words with the deepest interest.

Finally he gave a great sigh, and lowered it.

"Bile me up for whale blubber, if it ain't old Davy Jones afloat!"

"How does it look?" several of us inquired, in the same breath.

"I'll be hanged if I can tell! There's no bowsprit, and——"

Here he leveled the glass again, and shortly after continued his observations:

"There's no sail—no *nothin'*."

"There must be *something*."

"Aw—certainly—aw—*something*, certainly—aw—if your vision—aw—is able to discern it," ventured the gentle Adolphus Fitzgibbons.

"Don't you see anything like a sail?" inquired the captain.

"Not a speck; nor any place to put one, either. Hold a minute!" shouted Backstay Bob. "I've got her in range now. She hain't got the least mite of a boom, yard, or anything like. She looks like some great hulk of a lightboat. Hold on agin—*I see the bell!*—they've rigged it up at the masthead, so that it swings back'ard and for'ard every time the thing gives a lurch to leeward."

"Can you see anything aboard?"

"Not a creetur', living or dead."

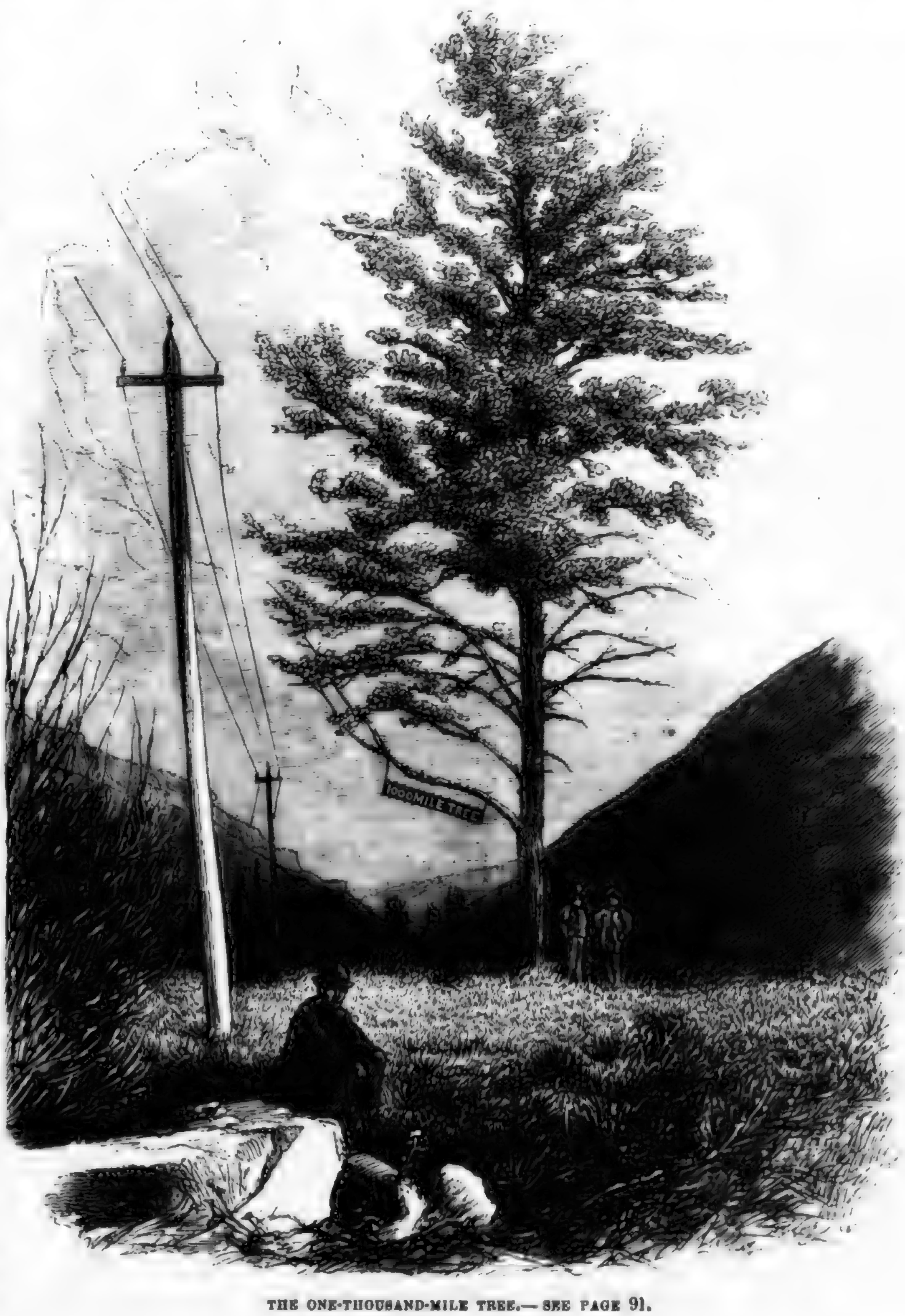
"Keep her away a couple of points," cried the captain, to the man at the wheel.

"Ay, ay, sir!" and the ship's course was altered, so as to bring her rapidly nearer the mysterious craft toward which all eyes were directed.

Several of the company now openly remarked that there was something supernatural in the appearance of this boat with its tolling bell. To all of these Florence Herndon and her lover replied lightly, neither of them having the least faith in their credulity. The captain listened, impatiently, and then said:

"You are all a set of ninnies. No doubt you imagine Old Nick is aboard, with a crew of little imps, bound for the Gallapagos Isles with a load of brimstone. If you'll just contain yourselves for half an hour longer, I'll tell you something about it, for I intend to board that old lumbering concern, even if it turns out to be the Flying Dutchman or Davy Jones's flagship, and shall explore it from stem to stern."

To show that he meant what he said, orders were given to heave to, and to get one of the boats in readiness. By this time the nondescript was plainly visible to all. It appeared to be an old hulk, with a single mast in the centre. The bell was suspended from the masthead, and ever and



THE ONE-THOUSAND-MILE TREE.— SEE PAGE 91.

XUM

anon sent forth its solemn tolling, as the hulk rose and sank with the heavings of the sea.

Before the ship was brought to, we had passed the hulk some distance, so that when we halted there were several hundred yards intervening, and it was only dimly discernible.

A boat was lowered, and the captain, having selected a crew, pulled away toward the hulk. I asked permission to accompany it, but, on account of my recent illness, was refused. Fortunate indeed for me was that refusal!

There was something so extraordinary regarding the appearance and action of the thing, that the curiosity of us all was so intense as to be painful. We leaned over the gunwale, and strained our gaze as the captain and his crew drew rapidly near it.

We saw the distance swiftly decrease between the two boats, until the shadowy forms merged into one. And then followed an impressive silence—suddenly broken by a howl, a pistol-shot and a scream; and, as our hearts almost stopped beating, we saw, a moment later, the boat put off from the hulk, and the men rowing with all their might back to the ship.

As they came near, we discerned that the captain was missing!

Backstay Bob dashed toward the boat, and shaking his fist at the men, demanded furiously:

"You cowardly dogs! where is Captain Luster?"

"The devil has got him!"

Absurd as this reply might have seemed at any other time, it was uttered in solemn earnest, as the ghastly faces of the crew attested. In reply to our eager questions, they said that the moment they came alongside the craft they heard a low, hollow, unearthly sound, which caused them to hesitate about going aboard. The captain, however, climbed up the side of the vessel, and after looking about the deck a moment, descended the hatchway, and disappeared from view.

He was scarcely out of sight when the noise they had heard at first was repeated, far louder and fiercer. The next moment the report of the captain's pistol was heard, followed by a terrible shriek, and then all was still.

Horror-struck, they called loudly and repeatedly to their commander, but receiving no answer, pulled away from the ship.

"You're a purty set of cowardly sneaks, ain't you! to go and desert your captain that way, when, like enough, he needed you to save his life!" roared Backstay Bob, forgetting in his fury that the first mate was among those he denounced. "I'm going back to that old hulk, and if I can't get at the devil in it any other way, I'll put a keg of powder in it and blow it to blazes!"

"Bob is right, if his excitement does make him forget his manners," said the mate. "It was not my intention to desert Captain Luster in trouble. The men were so frightened that I thought it best to come back and get a new set."

There was some difficulty in procuring the requisite number, and accordingly Prescott and myself were accepted. As the former went over the ship's side, Florence Herndon said:

"Don't *you* come back, Edmund, until you have learned what has become of poor Captain Luster."

He gave her his promise, and a few minutes later the boat shoved off, and we rapidly neared the hulk, which had acquired such a strange interest to us all.

Prescott, in addition to his revolver, had a small Italian dagger, which I observed him handle, as if to assure himself that it was reliable. Then, as he replaced it, he remarked to me:

"There's no telling what's inside that mass of lumber, and this may be the weapon I need, after all."

Arriving at the craft, after a short consultation it was agreed that the four oarsmen, the mate and myself should remain behind, while Backstay Bob and Edmund Prescott should explore the hulk. As it was morally certain that some dreadful danger menaced all who entered the cabin, and as I was good for nothing, I needed no more urging than the mate to remain in my position.

Prescott went first, holding his pistol in one hand and a lantern in the other, while Bob closely followed with his cutlass. We saw them descend the hatchway; all was still, and then I heard the single exclamation from Prescott: "Oh, my God!"

This was followed by a terrible roar, a quick succession of pistol-shots, a fierce struggle, and then all was still again.

The next moment both Prescott and Backstay Bob emerged to view, covered from head to foot with blood.

"Come aboard," said they; "the danger is over."

The next instant we were on deck. I rushed to the hold and gazed down. Merciful heaven! what did I behold?

By the dim light of the lantern we saw the mangled body of Captain Luster. The head and one of the limbs were gone, and there was scarcely a semblance of humanity in the remains before us. Near him was the gaunt, terrible form of an expiring Bengal tiger, killed by the bullets, cutlass and dagger of Prescott and Backstay Bob.

The two latter, on first entering the cabin, saw the mutilated body of Captain Luster. A low growl announced danger, and as Prescott turned his gaze, he saw the tiger crouching, and in the very act of springing. Dropping his lantern, he fired his revolver, and, as the terrible animal bore him to the floor, he drew his dagger and stabbed him again and again. The needle-pointed instrument reached his heart, which, united with the slashing blows of Backstay Bob, settled him before he could inflict any material injury.

We now made a critical examination of the place. A number of human bones strewed the floor, and several articles of wearing apparel, which seemed to indicate that the place had been tenanted by two human beings of opposite sexes, who had probably been torn to pieces by the famished tiger. The apartment was long and low, extending the whole length of the vessel, and having at either extremity a massive iron chain, terminating in a heavy ring at one end, the other being fastened by a strong staple to a beam in the vessel's side.

The brute had a chain to his neck, and had been confined to one corner of the apartment by a delicate iron ring, which had manifestly been put there to be broken. Over the centre of the room was written something in an Indian dialect, which was pronounced by the mate (who had spent several years in India) to read:

"I have sought—I have found that which I sought—vengeance."

Carefully removing the body of the captain to the little boat, we scuttled the mysterious craft, and it sank to the bottom of the ocean. Shortly after, the captain was wrapped in his winding-sheet, and followed.

The strange, awful tale regarding the old craft we never heard. It ever remained to us all an unraveled Mystery of the Sea.

A LOVING heart and a pleasant countenance are commodities which a man should always carry home.

XUM

THE METAMORPHOSES OF THE CICADA, OR LOCUST.

In this country, the *Cicada* goes by the name of locust, although it is entirely different from the locust of the other continent, which belongs to the army of grasshoppers.

One variety with us is popularly termed the seventeen-year locust, there being a general impression that it appears in swarms once in seventeen years; but as the seventeenth year seems to fall every year, we may well credit scientific men, and entertain doubts as to the common theory.

The *Cicada* family introduce us to the *Homoptera*, and form a well-characterized group, the kinds of which do not differ much amongst themselves, one *Cicada* being very much like another. In Southern Europe the Cigala (*Cicadæ*) are known to every one, and have been celebrated since the time of the highest antiquity; but they do not live in the centre and north of Europe. The perfect insects live upon trees, sucking the juice of the leaves, and the females deposit their eggs, from 500 to 700 in number, in the dead or dried branches, in holes which they bore by means of a very curious ovipositor, which is something like that of the saw-flies. They make little slits upon the branches, and drop an egg into each one of them

The metamorphoses of the *Cigala* are rather more advanced than those of the *Hemiptera*, and are like those of the dragon-flies. As soon as the larvæ are born—and they look very much like fleas in the first instance—they descend the tree and hide themselves in the earth, and suck the roots in their neighborhood. They are furnished with spiny legs and large and strong thighs, and these are capital instruments for digging. The nymphs crawl out of the earth and live upon the trunks of trees, or on the plants close by. After remaining perfectly quiet as nymphs for a short time only, their skin cracks down the back, and the perfect insect leaves its covering and takes flight.

The *Cigala* of the ash and of the elm are common in the South of France, and their wings are transparent and without any color; but this is not the case with the species of India and Southern Africa, for they have their wings magnificently tinted. The song of some of the Brazilian species is said to be heard for the distance of a mile.

THE ONE-THOUSAND-MILE TREE.

"Thousand-mile Tree's just ahead!" sings out the brakeman. He is a sociably disposed fellow, who keeps us company on the platform, and beguiles the time with chat, furnishing useful information to the female inquisitors who attack him every five minutes for the same, and jumping off at every stopping-place to snatch up stones and specimens for them. (The said specimens, be it observed, accumulate as stumbling-blocks along the passages, at the end of the car, and gradually form stone-quarries under every seat, until Howells spirits them away, under pretense of "jes' layin' 'em to one side for the ladies.")

The train "slows up," and we stop at the landmark by the wayside, everybody pouring out *en masse* as the camera is seen traveling down the track in the grasp of our photographer. It is nothing very remarkable—only a big cedar by the roadside, right on the grassy bank of the noisy little river, and to one of its lower limbs is fastened a great signboard, where you may read its name in black and white. One thousand miles from Omaha and the Missouri—that dividing line of the continent, cutting off "the States" from "the frontier"—one thousand miles from what we call "civilization" in the East, and nearly as far from that civilization of the West which concentrates at San Francisco.

It gives one a vaguely regretful feeling to be distinctly reminded that more than half our journey is over—slipped by almost without our heeding—and that only forty-eight hours more lie between us and the end of our iron trail!

But we jump down at the Thousand-mile Tree, pick up stones with the rest of the travelers, and duly pose for our pictures with them. In the sudden silence of the cañon, now that the puff and snort and rattle of the long train is silent, we can hear the foaming ripple of the Weber River singing loudly as it runs past between the high bluffs; can feel the stillness and the loneliness close round us, and finally guess at what they were before we came, and will be in a minute hence, when we are gone.

WINNING IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.

By Richard B. Kimball, Author of "St. Leger," "To-Day: A Romance," Etc.

BADEN-BADEN has long been known as the most extensive and the most fashionable of German—indeed, of European—watering-places.

In its capacity of grand pleasure resort, it has many features in common with our own Saratoga. Like Saratoga, it is (out of the season) a comparatively insignificant place. Like it, while the season lasts, there are attractive saloons, promenades, balls, concerts—indeed, nearly all the luxuries of a metropolis. Like it, also, it is a town of hotels and lodging-houses, and the principal street is filled with shops of greedy traders—Jew and Gentile—from various parts of Europe—the Tyrol, Switzerland, Paris—all of whom charge exorbitantly for their national commodities.

In addition, there are at Baden *licensed* gaming-tables and *hot* springs. Besides (which Saratoga is wretchedly deficient in), innumerable paths lead from the place, by a walk of a few minutes, into the very depths of dark woods and deep valleys, where you can enjoy a perfect seclusion from the haunts of men; while, if you choose to penetrate further, you will soon be within the boundaries of the notable Black Forest, quite ready, if you have a spark of romance, to submit to its extraordinary influences.

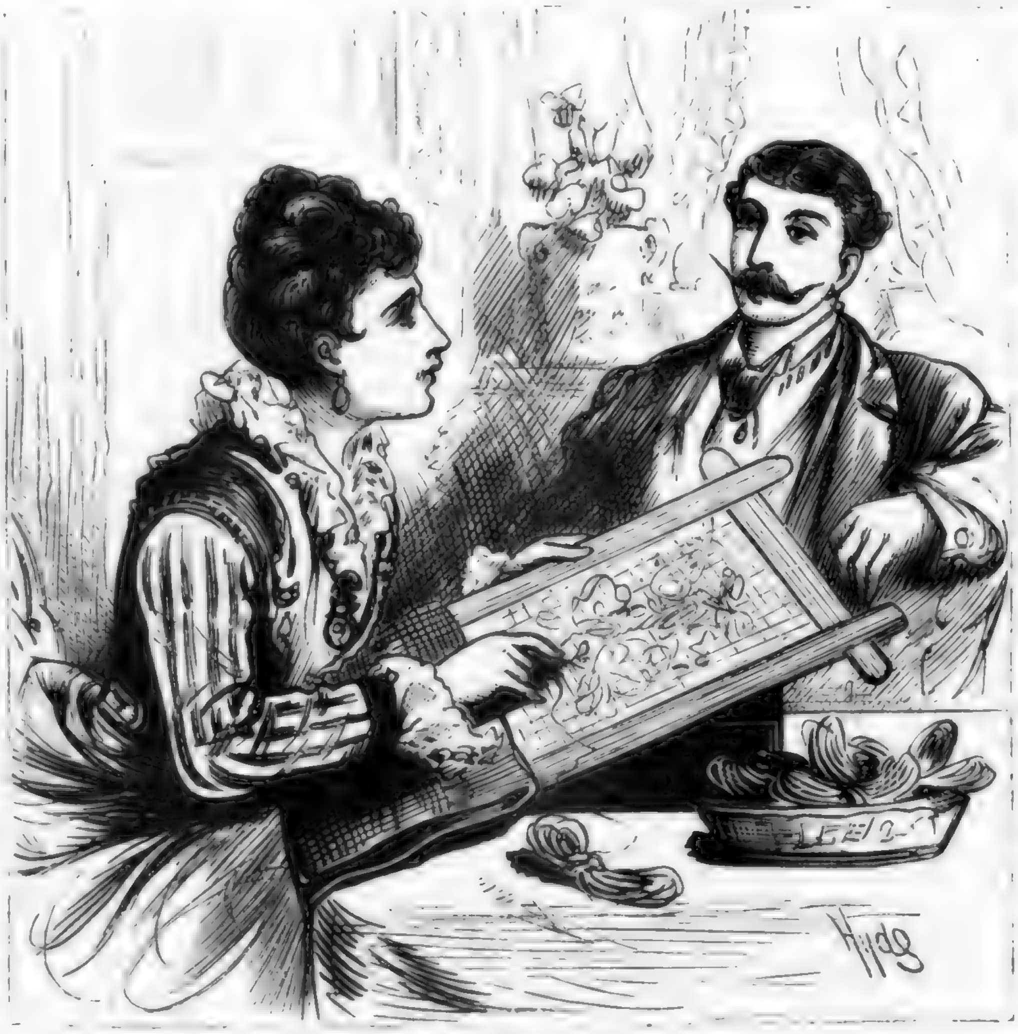
Baden, in days of yore, must have been a terror to the neighboring peasants, and a puzzle to the Inquisition and the Vehmgericht. For, from the rocks at the foot of the precipice on which is built what is called the *new* castle—it is only four hundred years old—burst thirteen hot springs, with a temperature at about the boiling-point, which, in earlier periods, led the people to suppose the spot was exceedingly near the capital of the Inferno.

The locality was named "Hölle" (Hell), and it has retained the appellation to this day.

A church was afterward erected near the place, and the inhabitants have not only become familiar with the perpetual outpouring, but are content to utilize this efflux from the regions below by laying pipes to supply the different baths, while they employ the surplus to scald their pigs and poultry. So much for the advancing spirit of the age!

To me Baden has always proved an interesting place, from the contrasts you can enjoy there. Out of conventional life and dissipation, it is easy to plunge directly into the recesses of forests, or among the old and picturesque ruins of former centuries.

If you are inclined to moralize, a fertile subject presents itself as you look down from the summit of the Alte Schloss on the town at your feet, and compare the violent deeds of rapine by which the lords of the castle subsisted and filled their treasury, with what is nightly practiced at the smooth, velvet-covered tables of Benazet, where the licensed plunderers exhibit the soft tread of the cat, the fascinating aspect of the leopard, and a studied decorum.



SOCIAL ETHICS.

MR. FITZ.—"*Do you think the husband should be subservient to the wife, Mrs. Lovejoy?*"
MRS. LOVEJOY—"*Oh, bless you, no. My husband has had his own way these three years.*"
(Which he has, in Greenwood Cemetery.)

It was my habit to spend a good deal of time every evening watching the countenances of those who were engaged at *rouge et noir* and *roulette*. I soon learned to distinguish between the professionals and the amateurs—the newcomer and the *habitué*. In no place is there so good an opportunity to study faces and characters.

I would occasionally select my subject for the evening, keep a close watch on his or her fortunes, and perhaps endeavor to identify myself with them. In this way I have retained many painful images, with some agreeable ones.

The old, the middle-aged, the young, of both sexes, embracing the high and low in the moral scale, are to be seen at these tables. The old present the most repulsive picture, and (I know not why) the sight of an old man engaged in systematic gaming disturbed me more than that of an old woman.

Let me give the reader some of the countenances which particularly impressed me. One was that of a young woman, perhaps five-and-twenty, who came every evening, precisely at half-past ten, to play *rouge et noir*, and who always quitted the room, whether winning or losing, exactly at twelve. Her form was slender and graceful; she had regular features, a clear, pale complexion, with dark hair and piercing black eyes. She dressed plainly but expensively, and seemed neither to seek nor avoid observation.

She always occupied, as nearly as was possible, the same position at the table, and, in deciding on "red" or "black," acted not only deliberately, but often with thoughtful hesitation. She attracted many spectators, some of whom kept the run of her game with evident interest. She paid, however, not the least attention to them.

There were others who attempted to follow her lead in playing. She did not always give them the opportunity, for she would often wait to the last instant before pushing her venture to the destined spot.

I have an idea she was a successful player—one, literally, of a thousand. Sometimes she had, very plainly, a run of ill-luck, but she nevertheless maintained her position till midnight, no matter what she was losing.

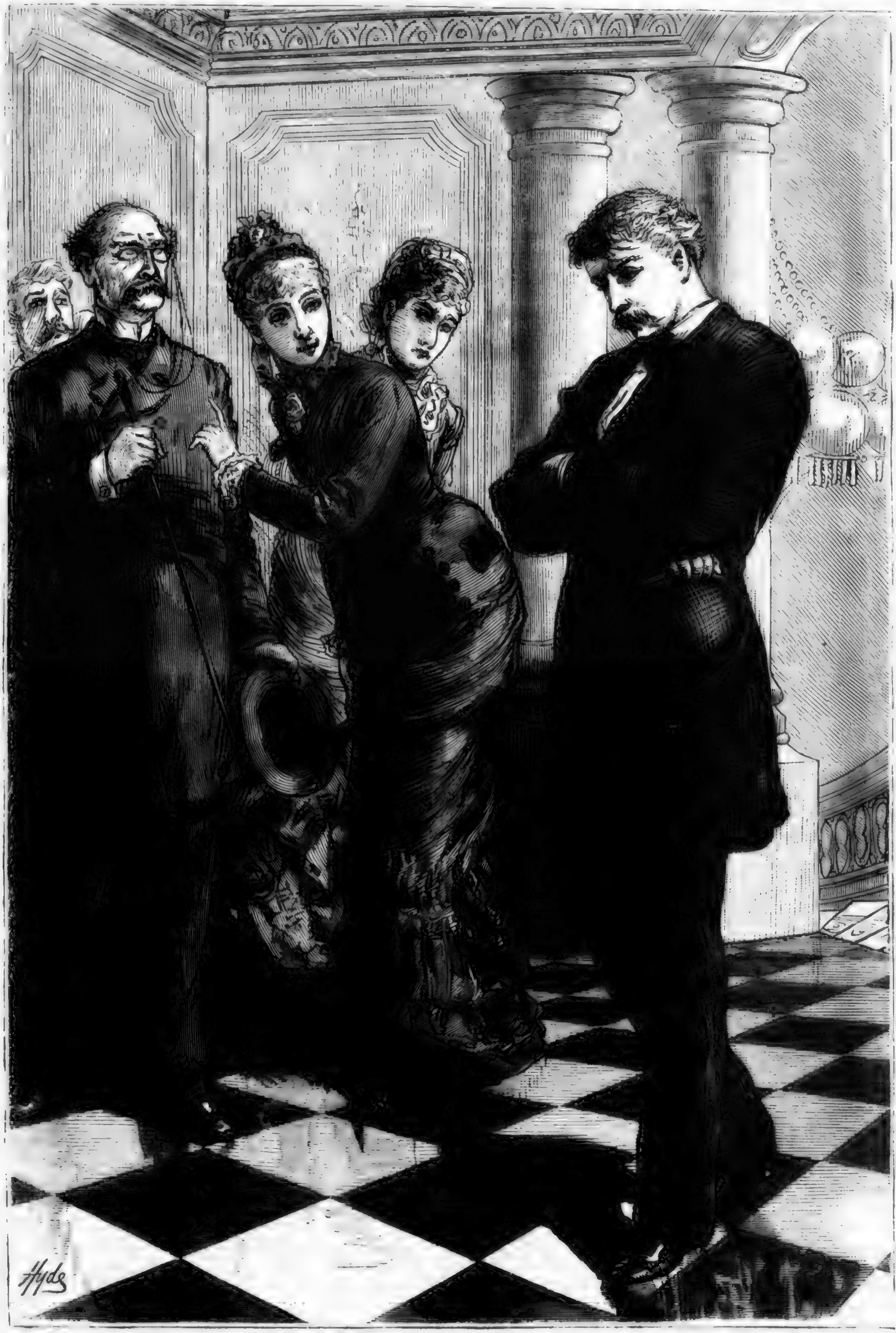
Who was she? Where from? What became of her? I do not know.

Another countenance which rises before me is that of a small, weazen-faced, dried-up old man, at least seventy. He wore a snuff-colored coat, nearly threadbare, of an antique style, and a world too wide for him. He, too, came regularly at eleven o'clock, and returned at about one. He differed from the young woman just mentioned in that he never looked up or around him to regard persons or things, while she often cast her eyes over the scene, though in the manner of a person preoccupied.

The old man always played with silver; the young woman, with gold, except during a run of bad luck, when she descended to "petty money."

I always felt sorry for this old fellow. He was so entirely abstracted that he appeared to belong to another world. He kept his store of silver in a long leathern purse, and when the play was going against him, he would draw out piece after piece from its recesses grudgingly, and lay it down with a trembling hand, as if sorry to part with it. When he won, the pieces were quietly slipped in the purse, as if they would be more secure than if left on the table, as was the ordinary custom.

This strange relic of humanity was found one morning dead in his bed. The long leathern purse contained



WINNING IN SPITE OF HIMSELF.—"AT TWELVE PRECISELY, WHAT WAS HER CONSTERNATION TO BEHOLD HER LOVER ENTERING THE PLACE! HE PASSED CLOSE TO HER, BUT HE LOOKED NEITHER TO THE RIGHT NOR LEFT."—SEE PAGE 91.

XUM

barely money enough to bury him. All that was ever known of him was that he had been accustomed to frequent the tables for over a quarter of a century.

There was a young man who came constantly to this place—a bold, reckless gamester—who showed traces of early refinement and culture under a hardened visage and defiant look. I used to watch him with great interest.

Once, as I stood opposite, while regarding him with a sort of unconscious eagerness—for he fascinated me by his daring, reckless, unscrupulous demeanor—he happened to raise his eyes, and they met mine.

For an instant it seemed as if he shrank from my gaze. But he quickly recovered, and returned it with one so bold and hard, as if he triumphed in openly exhibiting his vices, that it has always haunted me.

I have heard many stories of suicides in and near the gambling-rooms—some of them very frightful—but have never "assisted" on any of these occasions. Once, indeed, I did hear, from an adjoining room, a dull, muffled thud, which I was told was a pistol-shot; and the next morning the story was rife at the hotels that a very young man—a Frenchman—having made shipwreck of all he was worth, retired to the next room and blew his brains out. I never learned anything more about it.

An English friend, illustrating the terrible hold this vice takes on the confirmed gambler, said that he had thrice furnished funds to an acquaintance to enable him to return to his family and home in England, on a pledge of his honor that he would do so; but no sooner was the money received than the man hastened to the tables, and risked and lost it at *roulette*.

This was repeated. The third time he appeared so utterly distressed, and exhibited so much penitence, that my informant concluded again to trust him. On this occasion he did leave, and, as was supposed, for England. What was the surprise of his friend, a little while after, on visiting Homburg, to find the man there, enjoying a "splendid run of luck."

He confessed that he had no moral strength, when once in possession [of the money, to resist this terrible propensity.

While on the subject, a pleasant little story occurs to me, which was told me by an agreeable old German, who was spending the Summer at Baden for his health.

We used to lounge about the place together, and frequently take a cup of coffee in company under the trees of the main avenue.

"I see," he remarked one day, "the Count Stalkenberg has arrived. You have heard the count's story, no doubt?" he continued.

I answered in the negative. My companion was surprised.

"Never heard how Count Stalkenberg secured his wife?"

"Never."

"Nor read of it in the Baden *Vade Mecum?*"

"No."

"Why, it is the principal stock in trade here for story-tellers for the last twenty years."

"Still, I declare I have never heard it."

"You shall have it in brief, then, while we finish our coffee," exclaimed my enthusiastic German. "Everybody has his own version. You shall have mine. I am distantly related to the Helderstein branch of the Von Stalkenbergs, and you can rely on what I say as literal fact."

I settled myself comfortably in my chair, and the old gentleman proceeded:

"The Von Stalkenbergs were formerly a very rich family, but, at the beginning of the century, the then count was a reckless, dissipated, dare-devil fellow, addicted to gaming, and all sorts of extravagances.

"He had the misfortune to lose his wife two years after his marriage. She left a little boy, whom the count placed with a sister, who consented to take charge of him. He was thus left free to pursue his vicious course. In a few years he ran through all his ready cash, what he had in the banks, his property, his vineyards on the Rhine, the family chateau—everything.

"One night the count fell ill. It was said he had mixed and drank off a potion, which did the work for him. He went to sleep, and never woke again this side of eternity.

"As to his estate, there was little or nothing to administer on. The very house he died in belonged to the 'bank' at Baden. But, by a careful management, a pittance was saved, which would afford the son a bare maintenance, in a strictly economical way, as bachelor.

"The young man was carefully educated—this was his aunt's work. His career at the gymnasium was highly creditable. He pursued legal studies at Heidelberg, and at four-and-twenty was considered one of the handsomest and most accomplished young fellows of the day. Only he was wretchedly poor.

"It had early been impressed on him to avoid gaming. His father's course was distinctly explained to him, and the particulars of his death were not concealed; on the contrary, his aunt made use of them to instill in her nephew's very nature a horror of the habit which had proved so disastrous to his family.

"The young Wilhelm, as he grew up, took a solemn oath that under no circumstances and in no possible event would he ever, directly or indirectly, touch cards or dice, or lay any wager of any sort. This oath he kept scrupulously.

"The year he was four-and-twenty, this landless young count spent many weeks at Baden. A dangerous spot, you will say, for one in his situation. What could be his object? Even the very small and ill-furnished chamber which he occupied (really a garret) was almost beyond his means.

"Yet he lingered, week after week, unable, it would seem, to tear himself away. Did the gaming-tables awaken the hereditary instinct? No; he was in love.

"Katrina Von Eberstein was the only child of a rich baron, who, in his youth, was an intimate friend of the Count Stalkenberg, Wilhelm's father. Like most Germans, he had sown his wild oats without injury to his patrimony, and forswore the company of the count—once his boon companion—in season.

"The two families had been on terms of friendship for generations, and nothing, at one time, would have been more acceptable to either than an intermarriage. Now, however, things had changed. The young count was little else than a needy adventurer, in the eyes of the baron.

"But, what was something to the purpose in the eyes of Katrina, he was the handsomest, the most attractive, the most perfect of young gentlemen. His standing in society, by reason of his birth and his uniform high demeanor, was fully equal to that of the baron, but the poor fellow had scarcely a kreutzer wherewith to support it. What was to be done?

"All he did do was to plunge more desperately than ever in love with Katrina, who, willful girl! in view of the fact that her father, the baron, frowned on the youngster, fell, in her turn, desperately in love with Wilhelm.

"At this point the young count could no longer restrain himself. He utterly scorned any secret or underhand measures.

"He went directly to the baron, and bodly demanded his daughter in marriage. He was received with frigid courtesy.

"'Your name and lineage are unexceptionable,' quoth the baron. 'Personally, I have nothing to say to your discredit. But you are houseless, homeless, and wretchedly poor. Your patrimony is in the hands of strangers, so that even your presence in the country ought to be painful to you. Regarding you, as I do, as a gentleman by birth and breeding, I am somewhat astonished that you should approach me on such a subject.'

"'Should I be able to retrieve my family fortunes——'

"'That would be another affair,' interrupted the baron, 'quite another affair; but 'tis idle to speak of it.'

"'What amount of fortune on my part would so far satisfy you that I might be permitted to address your daughter?'

"The baron hesitated. The question appeared to him a very foolish one. Still, he would answer it, and in a way which should show the young man he was not unreasonable. He would, to be sure, name a respectably large figure, but not so unconscionable a sum as would imply he intended to put an absolute stay on Wilhelm's aspirations.

"All things considered, it was as moderate as could be expected.

"The young count thanked the old baron, and turned to leave the room.

"'One word,' said the latter.

"Wilhelm stopped.

"'No gaming,' echoed the baron, sternly.

"'No gaming,' was the equally stern reply; and the young man departed.

"I imagine Katrina knew the result of this interview even before her father communicated it to her. This he did, with a severe injunction not to permit her feelings to be interested till he gave his consent.

"Wilhelm had his own plans. Katrina was but seventeen, and there was still time for them. One week more spent near her, and he was to depart to carry them out.

"That night the young count had a remarkable dream. His father appeared to him, as he thought, and said, in an impressive tone, '*Look in the drawer of your escritoire!*'

"The words impressed him so much, that when he rose he mechanically went to it, and opened the drawer, which was in daily use, and unlocked. What was his amazement to discover several rouleaus of gold!

"What could it mean? There was no mistake about it. He handled the pieces. They were genuine, and the sum was large.

"Greatly disturbed by the spectacle, unable in any way to account for it, since he was in the habit of opening the drawer daily, the young man sat entirely bewildered. He did not know what to do. At last he rose, placed the rouleaus in a secure place, and went out to breakfast. That finished, he returned once more to examine the treasure; for, as it had come in a manner so unaccountable, might it not disappear with equal facility? However, there it was, in good, solid, heavy pieces.

"The rest of the day was spent in a bewildering state. Night came to his relief; he retired early, and soon sank into a deep sleep.

"Strange to relate, his former dream was revived. Again his father's shade appeared to him, exclaiming: '*Look in the drawer of your escritoire!*' Again, on waking in the morning, he hastened to open it, and found even more gold than on the previous day!

"Wilhelm thought he must be bewitched. Then it occurred to him some kind benefactor was taking this method to give him substantial aid. But who would do this? Besides, his dream!

"Heated and feverish with excitement, he wandered about the town. He had not courage to call on Katrina. He felt, somehow, like a criminal. He thought of giving up his lodgings, and flying from the place. Yet the spot, with its golden secret, fascinated him.

"Again he retired to rest, and again the scenes of the previous night and morning were repeated. Gold—yellow gold—flowed in on him!

"Wilhelm was nearly crazy. He became pale, careworn and abstracted. He even avoided his beloved Katrina. Still he could not help keeping count of the treasure.

"As it gradually swelled in amount, he saw that, at this rate, very soon he would possess the sum required by the baron, and be free to address his daughter. His heart beat loudly at the thought.

"Thus matters ran for nearly a week, with the same daily results. His last deposit had given him more than the sum stipulated.

"Only think of it!

"Wilhelm sat, that morning, in a sort of maze. One thing he was decided on—he would quit the place. The locality seemed to him dangerous. Another week, and he would lose his senses. It occurred to him that he would take an exact account of his treasure, secure it in one solid parcel, and arrange for his departure. Once safe away from the wizard spell, he would return, call on the baron, and claim the fulfillment of his promise.

"He locked his door, brought forth the rouleaus, placed them on the table, and began his count. In the midst of his labors he was disturbed by a heavy tread up his narrow staircase, and a loud knock at his apartment.

"He was silent; the knock was repeated. He hastily swept the gold into an open drawer, and opened the door.

"Who should enter but the Baron Von Eberstein! Wilhelm asked him to be seated.

"'I did not come to sit or parley, but to express to you my sense of your disgraceful conduct, and to tell you never to appear within my doors again.'

"'What do you mean? What *can* you mean?' gasped the young man.

"'Do not add duplicity to your other vices,' exclaimed the baron. 'I find you to be a notorious gamester, false to your oath, and scandalous in your undisguised practices.'

"'I do not understand you!' cried Wilhelm.

"'You deny the charge?'

"'I do, on my honor.'

"'Honor!' said the other, scornfully. 'What is that?' pointing to the drawer, which Wilhelm had unconsciously left open, and where the gold was displayed in full view. 'Have you now the hardihood to deny it?'

"'As I hope for happiness here and hereafter, I am ignorant of how that came in my possession. I discovered it in my chamber.'

"At this the baron flew into a terrible rage, and left the apartment, after heaping on Wilhelm the most opprobrious and insulting expressions. The latter was in despair. He knew not what to do. Later in the day he endeavored to see Katrina, but was denied admittance.

"At last he engaged a conveyance to leave early the next morning, and carry him away from the place of abominations.

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"Meanwhile the baron had informed his daughter that Wilhelm had gone the way of his father, and was gaming desperately.

"'I do not believe it,' was her loyal response.

"'Perhaps if you saw it, you would allow yourself to be convinced?'

"'I certainly never will be so till I do,' she answered.

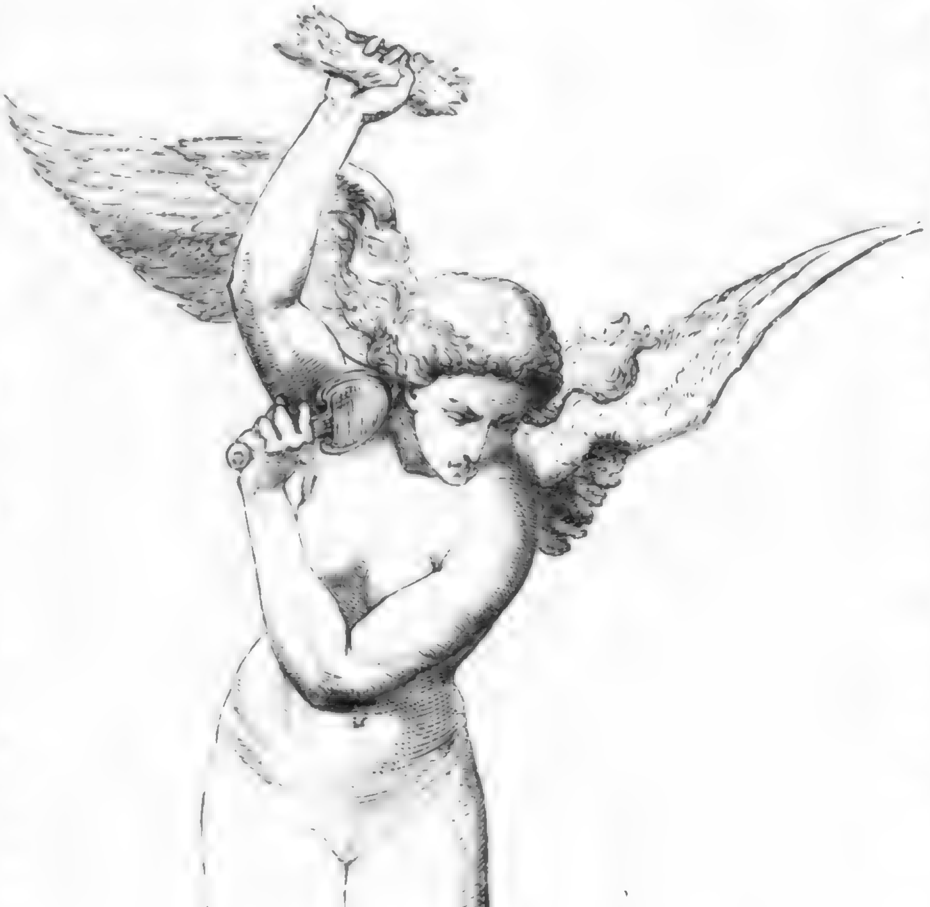
"'Very well; come with me this evening.'

"About half-past eleven the baron and Katrina, with two or three friends, entered the room where *rouge et noir* is played, the baron confident on one side, Katrina confident on the other.

"'I am sure I do not see him,' said the young lady.

"'Wait,' responded the baron.

"She did wait. At twelve precisely, what was her consternation to behold her lover entering the place!



AVENGING TRUTH.—FROM THE STATUE BY PROUHA.

"He had a perfectly calm expression. He passed so close to her that he almost touched her, but he looked neither to the right nor left. Seating himself at the table, he commenced playing.

"'Are you satisfied?' said her father.

"His daughter did not reply. She stepped closer to her lover, and regarded him fixedly. Then, suddenly catching hold of his arm, she shook him vigorously.

"The young man started to his feet, and began to rub his eyes. He had been fast asleep—in fact, he was a sleep-walker. The young lady had seen it at a glance, and so the mystery was made clear. There was great rejoicing, and the young people were very happy.

"A disagreeable question was started the next morning—what should be done with the money which had been won?

"The old baron took a rather sensible view of the affair. He thought what the young count had gained was but a trifle compared with what the old count had lost, and there need be no scruples about keeping it.

"Wilhelm, however, felt differently. He resolved to return the gold to the 'bank.' The manager, with many thanks, declined to receive it. Doubtless he would have been willing to handle the cash, but he feared the precedent. If he *took* back, might he not be called on to *pay* back?

"So the young count kept the money and married Katrina, and from the night of his wedding was never known to walk in his sleep."

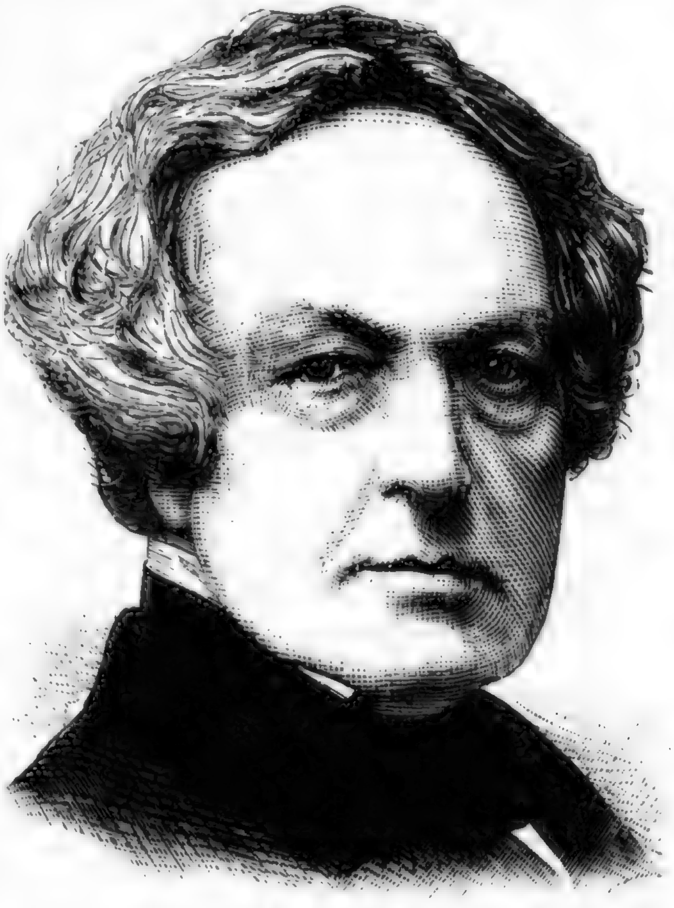
"And is this a positive fact?" I asked, as my companion concluded.

"Positive," replied the old German; "and the only correct version, I assure you."

THE London *Globe* announces that the skull of Confucius is for sale in a curiosity shop in that city, but so far it has found no purchaser. It was found at Pekin during the plunder of the Summer Palace of the Emperor by the allied French and English troops in 1860, and was then mounted in gold and ornamented with diamonds to the value of $50,000. It was brought to London in 1862, and exhibited in the Universal Exposition, where, on account of its mounting, it attracted attention. Sixty thousand dollars were offered for it, but now, stripped as it is of its gold and jewels, it cannot find a purchaser at any price.

W. C. MACREADY.

By J. Brander Matthews.



W. C. MACREADY.

The appearance within a year or two of new and important biographies of Edwin Forrest and Charlotte Cushman, the great American dramatic artists, makes timely a telling anew of the life of the great English actor, who had so marked an influence on the career of each.

Macready, like so many famous actors, was the son of a provincial manager, who gave him a liberal education in view of the bar. After he had been three years at Rugby, the elder Macready became too much embarrassed to pay the bills of his son, who at once left the school to give his father the benefit of his assistance.

On Thursday evening, June 7th, 1810, when he was seventeen years old, he made his first appearance as *Romeo*, with great success. As the curtain fell, a lady asked him: "Well, sir, how do you feel now?" He replied: "I feel as if I should like to act it all over again."

For six years he remained in the provinces, playing "star" engagements at Dublin, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Bath, etc., and in his father's theatre, supporting Mrs. Jordan—whose merry laugh he long remembered—and Mrs. Siddons, who encouraged him, saying, in her stately way: "Study, study, study! and do not marry till you are thirty!" He also played with Mr. Betty, who had once been Master Betty, the "Young Roscius"—as a child overpraised, and as a man undervalued, by the fickle public.

Macready took Mrs. Siddons's advice—he studied. He lost no opportunity of perfecting himself. After service every Sunday he would lock himself in the empty theatre, and pace the stage for hours, reciting parts and practicing gestures.

During all these years, he was negotiating for an appearance at one of the two patent theatres in London. Lord Byron was then on the committee mismanaging Drury Lane, and when the Rev. J. Noel, a relative of the poet, was urging Macready's claims, he expatiated on his merits, adding:

"And besides all this, Mr. Macready is a very moral man."

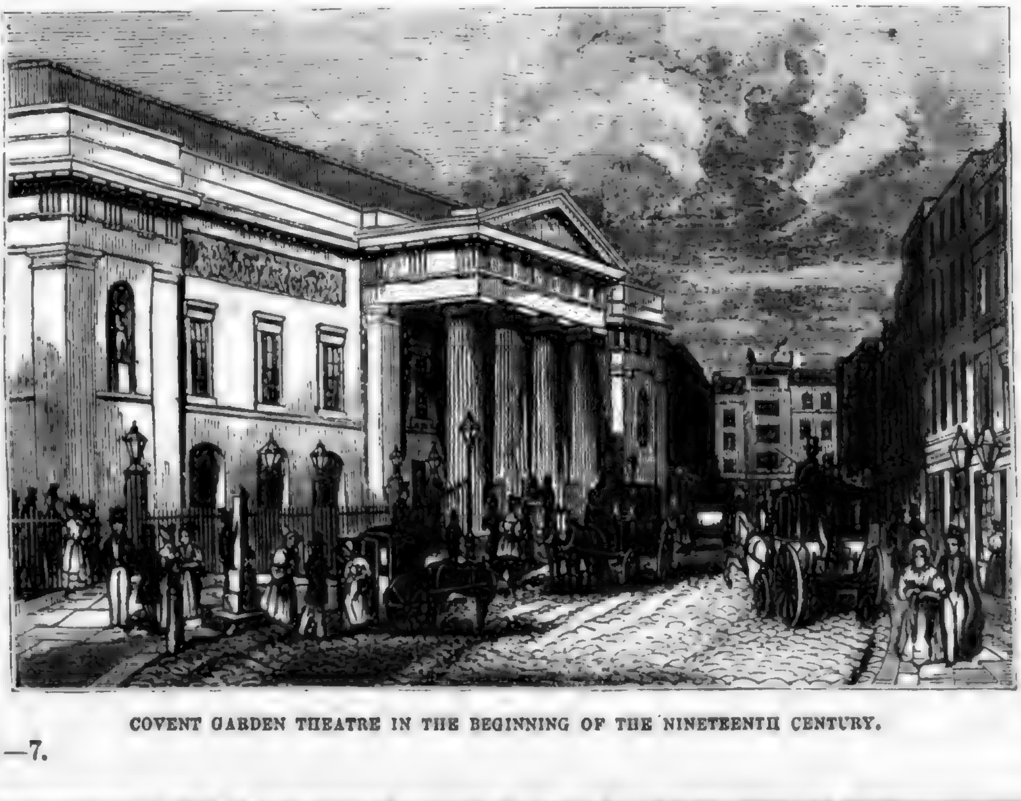
To which Lord Byron characteristically replied:

"Ah! Then, I suppose, he asks five pounds a week more for his morality."

Macready made his first appearance in London at the Covent Garden Theatre, on September 16th, 1816, as *Orestes* in Phillips's "Distressed Mother." His success enrolled him among the leading actors of the metropolis. Mrs. Siddons and John Kemble, although alive, no longer ruled the stage; but Edmund Kean, Young, Charles Kemble, Booth, George Frederick Cooke and Miss O'Neil had succeeded to their thrones. It was among these that Macready had to win his way by sheer intellectual power alone, for he was aided by no beauty or grace of form or feature. Indeed, he was a very homely man. He himself overheard the reply of a gentleman who was asked if he had seen the new actor.

"What, Macready? No, I've not seen him yet. I am told he is a capital actor, but a devilish ugly fellow—they say he is an ugly likeness of Liston."

Now, Liston prided himself on his plainness. "Macready," said Lord Lytton, later, "looks like a baffled tyrant."



COVENT GARDEN THEATRE IN THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

For a long time he could get no parts but "villains." At last, however, he had an opportunity as *Rob Roy*, and he made the most of it. It was a strong melodramatic part, and Macready succeeded in forming it with vigorous vitality. And in 1820, when "Virginius" was

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first produced, those who had thought Macready only a good actor of heavy or melodramatic parts were forced to change their opinion. It was the first play of Knowles ever acted, and it was the first original leading tragic part ever intrusted to Macready. Both actor and author achieved a great success.

Within a very few years, Macready's position improved so rapidly that his right to a place in the front rank of the best actors of the day was disputed by none. In 1823, Elliston, then managing Drury Lane, engaged both Macready and Edmund Kean, with the idea of having both play in the same piece. But Kean, unhappiest of "Mother Carey's chickens," refused, saying he did not mind Young, but would not act with Macready.

In 1826 he paid his first visit to America, and in 1828 he took a trip to Paris, where he created a great excitement, assisted in part by the beauty of Miss Smithson, so grotesquely courted by Hector Berlioz. The full-blooded, able-bodied, robust English drama, so different from dry bones of French tragedy, produced an undoubted effect upon at least one of the French spectators. Alexandre Dumas, then earning his livelihood by his beautiful penmanship, had determined to live by his pen. To the force of Macready's acting, and to the freshness of the plays he produced, Dumas ever acknowledged himself greatly indebted. Indeed, the visit of the English actors to Paris has always in a certain degree been considered the starting-point of the romantic revolution.

Three years later, Macready appeared in "The Pledge; Or, Castilian Honor," an adaptation of Victor Hugo's "Hernani." It seems almost as incongruous for Macready to act the fiery *Hernani*, as for the pathetic Mme. Dorval, whom Macready justly praises, to appear, as she did once, as *Miladi Tizle* in "L'Ecole du Scandale."

In 1836, Macready was acting at Drury Lane under the management of Alfred Bunn—"Poet" Bunn, as *Punch* afterward called him. After submitting to great annoyance, insult and provocation, Macready so far forgot himself as to strike Bunn, saying, as he did so: "You damned scoundrel, how dare you use me so?" For this act, which he at once bitterly repented, Macready was sued by the "hot, cross" Bunn (*Punch* again). By the advice of his friend, Sergeant Talfourd, and other counsel learned in the law, Macready offered no defense, and the jury awarded Bunn £150 damages—which could not have satisfied Bunn, as he copiously and mendaciously abused Macready in his book on "The Stage."

Macready's act was without excuse, but not without great provocation. His profession was most unfortunate for a man of his temperament. He had inherited certain defects of temper which he deeply deplored. Fully aware of his errors, Macready strove earnestly to amend. Some of the most eloquent passages in his diaries record his struggles with himself. His father must have been a most uncomfortable man to get along with. Again and again he records the loss of his temper, and it sometimes even seems probable that he had not found it when he made the entry. But with those who knew him well—who were really his friends, he never quarreled. In spite of his frequent irascibility, he was a very kind-hearted man. Indeed, the badness of his temper often only masked the goodness of his heart.

Mr. John Brougham, who was the stage-manager of the Howard Athenæum, in Boston, when Macready played there in 1849, tells a curious story, showing his tendency to get in a terrible rage about trifles. "Macready always came to the theatre two hours before the curtain went up, and he would sit down and chat and talk and grumble about the things which had displeased him the day before, and make all sorts of trivial complaints. On one occasion he started up suddenly and called to his man, Thompson:

"'Thompson! Great heavens, what a beast you are! Thompson, I don't know why in thunder I should be bothered and annoyed and pestered by such an infernal scoundrel.'

"'What—what—is the matter?' gasped the frightened Thompson.

"'Look round and see, you scoundrel. Don't you see you have forgotten something?'

"'I don't know, indeed, what I have forgotten,' said Thompson.

"'*My book of beards!*' roared Macready.

"Thompson rushed out into the street and across to the Revere House for the book, and then Macready turned to me and said:

"'Brougham, did you ever know such a wretch? Did you ever see such a consummate scoundrel? I ask you how I can preserve the equilibrium of mind I require for the arduous labors I have to undergo, with such a villain?'

"At last Thompson rushed in, and laid the book of beards before him. Again Macready eyed him, and flew at him in a violent rage once more.

"'Thompson,' he said, 'when I took you out with me I promised your people I would take as much care of you, confound you, as I could—as much as your brutal nature would permit anybody to do; and yet, on such a night as this, with the snow on the ground, *you go out without an overcoat!*'"

As I have said, the stage was a most unfortunate profession for a man of Macready's temperament. His imperious manner unfitted him for close association with his fellow-actors. He felt himself out of place in the greenroom. His full consciousness of the precariousness of his position as the leading tragic actor of England, and his acquaintance with the fickleness of the public, on whom he, of necessity, depended, laid him open to constant self-annoyance.

Webster's assertion that there is always room on top is only half true of the theatre. There can only be one monarch behind the curtain. There cannot be two kings in the same greenroom. There are never two best parts in the same play; seldom are there two equally good. When an actor is once elbowed out of sight by a competitor he can rarely regain his place.

Macready was always afraid of a rival near the throne. In 1837 he notes that he sent for the *Morning Herald*, and read the account of Mr. Phelps's appearance, "which seems to me a decided success. It depressed my spirits, though perhaps it should not do so. If he is greatly successful, I shall reap the profits; if moderately, he will strengthen my company. But an actor's fame and his dependent income are so precarious that we start at every shadow of an actor. It is an unhappy life!"

And yet, although thus nervous, he was very just. He was what actors call "fair." He always let his assistants take their mead of applause, and he gave Anderson, Vandenhoff and Phelps many a golden opportunity.

Macready managed Covent Garden in 1837 and Drury Lane in 1842. The next year he again visited America. In 1845 he gave a second series of performances in Paris. In 1848 he left England to pay us his third visit. Mr. Dickens would not go to see him off, for fear the news should travel to the United States, and Macready be punished for his intimacy with the author of "American Notes" and "Martin Chuzzlewit." This shows at once the thoughtful kindness of Mr. Dickens, and the exaggerated opinion he had of his own importance.

Macready undoubtedly liked this country. His liking

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was formed after examination and upon judgment. It was during this visit of Macready's to our country that an event occurred discreditable to all concerned—to Macready, to Edwin Forrest, and to the City of New York. With Mr. Alger's semi-official biography of Forrest before us, and with Macready's diary at hand, it is possible to consider anew the whole melancholy squabble which ended in the foolish and bloody Astor Place riot.

Macready and Forrest had been friends during the early visits of each to the country of the other. Macready welcomed Forrest to London, and when the Englishman in turn became a traveler again he resided, while in this city, in the American actor's house. Although Macready made money during his visit to this country in 1843 and 1844, it was at the expense of the managers, for he had failed to attract as large audiences as had been expected, and he left America with a natural feeling of disappointment, in spite of his pecuniary profit. When next Forrest visited England he was courteously received by press and public—with one marked exception.

In the *Examiner*, then edited by John Forster, the friend and biographer of Dickens, Forrest was criticized with brutal severity, and treated, indeed, with marked contempt and contumely. Knowing that Forster was very intimate with Macready, Forrest naturally saw in this attack the hand of his former friend. On one occasion Forrest was hissed under such circumstances as to leave no doubt in his mind that the intention was deliberate, and the insult premeditated and personal, and he believed that this, too, was Macready's work.

With the knowledge the English actor's diary has given us of his character, we now know this to be extremely improbable; but the thought was natural to Forrest, who, scorning all underhand machinations, in retaliation for this hiss he believed to be secretly due to Macready, one day himself hissed Macready openly. This ill-advised and discourteous act opened a deadly breach—and led to fatal results. With Macready's character, it was scarcely possible for him to come to this country soon after without making uneasy and restless allusions to an alleged conspiracy against him—a conspiracy which existed only in his imagination, although the language of more than one newspaper here was intemperate enough to give color to it. In Philadelphia Macready was hissed, and in reply he ill-advisedly made use of Forrest's name. An angry correspondence followed.

In May, 1849, both actors had engagements in New York; party feeling ran high here then, and Forrest was endeared to one faction—the noisiest and least reputable. On the 8th, Macready made his first appearance, and was shamefully treated. He refused to act again, but yielded to the request of the leading citizens, and was announced for the 11th. It was evident that the brutality of Tuesday was to be repeated on Friday. Forrest advised letting "the superannuated driveler alone," but it is not known that he took any steps to allay the excitement of his partisans. Macready appeared on the 11th as *Macbeth;* a riot ensued; the Seventh Regiment fired on the mob; and thirty dead and dying remained on the stones of the surrounding streets.

In 1851, two years after his final visit to America, Macready made a farewell tour of the principal cities of England. In London, on February 26th, he made his last appearance on the stage, as *Macbeth.* On March 1st, a farewell dinner was given to him, at which the leading representatives of literature and art were present.

Macready did not regret the loss of the life he had never liked. His retirement was enlivened by the society of many brilliant and devoted friends. Weakened by domestic bereavement, he began to fail in 1869, and at the age of eighty, on April 27th, 1873, he died. The last legible entries in his diary, written with a trembling hand, are, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" and "Lord, I believe; help Thou mine unbelief!" On May 4th, he was buried at Kensal Green.

Macready is a rare instance of a man's success in a profession he did not like. Intended for the bar, he was forced on the stage by his father's losses. Even after he held a position among the first—although not absolutely the first—he thought of studying for the pulpit, and was prevented only by the necessity of immediately earning enough to repay money borrowed by him to lend to his brother.

Scattered through his diaries are frequent references to his distaste for the stage. "I could curse the hour that it was suggested to me; I would eat a crust, or eat nothing, rather than play in it." He was afraid his children "should imbibe a liking for the wretched art which I have been wasting my life upon. God forbid!"

The sight even of his name in the playbills on the walls affected him most unpleasantly. And yet, with a full knowledge of the effect of extraneous trifles upon an actor's reputation, he always insisted upon his name being given due prominence. Dowton had the same dislike to seeing his name blazoned upon dead walls in capital letter, telling Elliston that whenever he passed such a playbill he could almost feel that the bystanders were saying, "There he is! Now for the reward!"

Although Macready hated his profession, he loved his art. To a great dislike for the stage, he added an admiration even greater for the drama. He was constantly conning over old plays, to see if they would not bear revival. He was ever ready to read new plays by untried authors, in the hope that he might find something worthy. He thoroughly understood the great advantage to an actor of a good part in a successful new play. In an old part, the actor is always wrestling with the shadow of his predecessors; and however brilliant and truthful may be his rendering of the *rôle,* there will always be those who will condemn the new-fangled reading, out of regard for the superannuated old-fashioned.

Macready was the protagonist at the original production of more successful and enduring plays than any other modern actor. Garrick was the "creator," to use the expressive French phrase, of few original parts; Kean of none, and Kemble of only *Rolla,* in "Pizarro," and the *Stranger.* Macready was the original representative of *Virginius, William Tell, Claude Melnotte, Richelieu, Alfred Evelyn* and *Ion.*

To Macready's desire as an actor of good parts, and to his appreciation as a critic of poetic ability, we owe a long list of beautiful plays, varying in merit as they varied in success, but all showing a strong wish to enlist the pen of the poet in the service of the stage. Indeed, Mr. R. H. Horne, the author of the farthing epic, "Orion," taxed Macready with causing a waste of poetic labor, from the futile encouragement he held out to poets without dramatic ability.

To Macready we owe the production of Sheridan Knowles's "Virginius" and "William Tell," Bulwer's "Lady of Lyons," "Richelieu" and "Money," Talfourd's "Ion," Browning's "Strafford" and "Blot on the 'Scutcheon," Sheil's "Evadne," Baunn and Sheil's "Damon and Pythias," Gerald Griffin's "Gisippus," White's "King of the Commons," Lovell's "Provost of Bruges," Marston's "Patrician's Daughter"—of a truth, a goodly list.

Some of these plays were very successful, remaining in the repertory to this day; others failed, and have been

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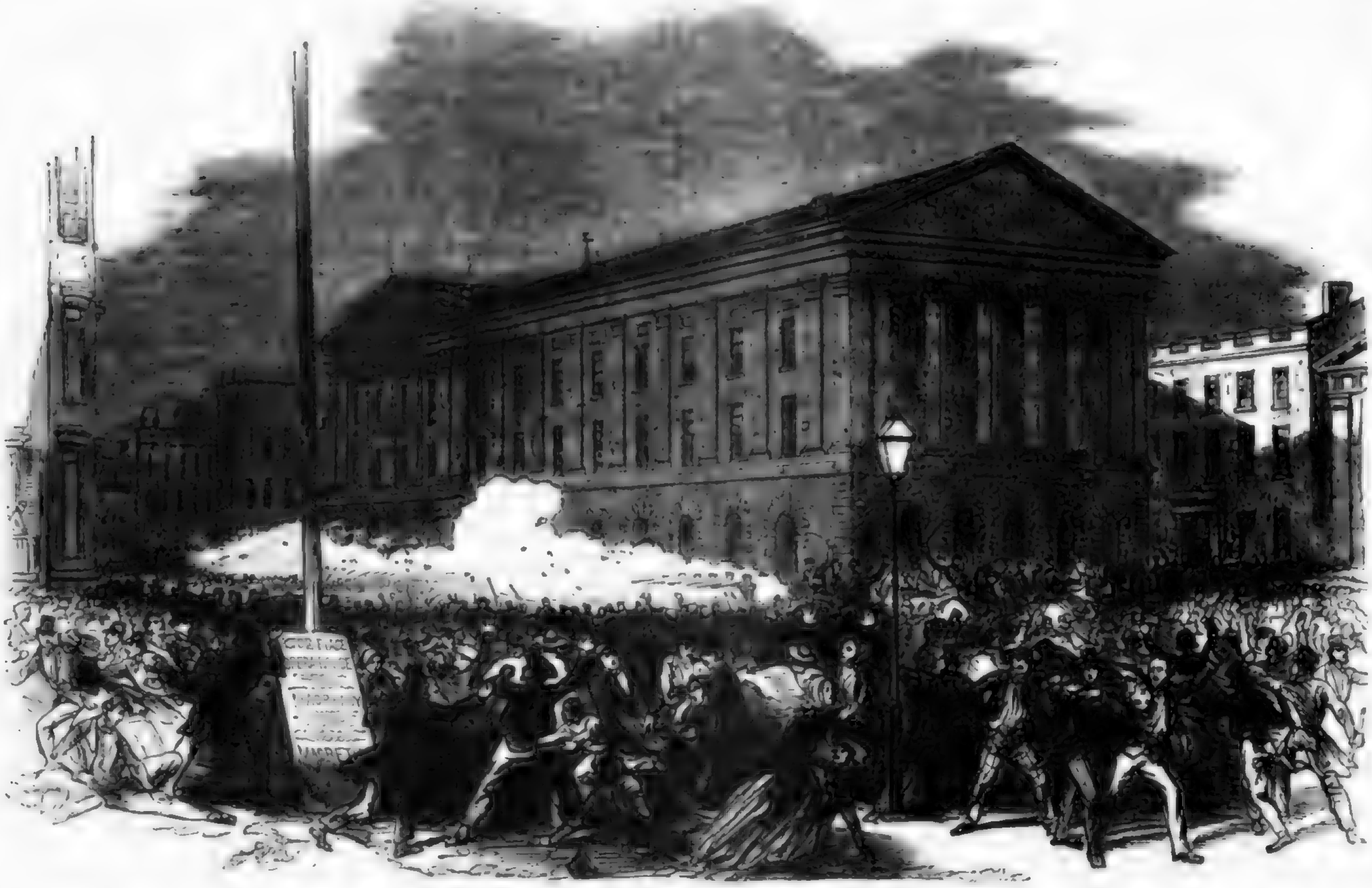
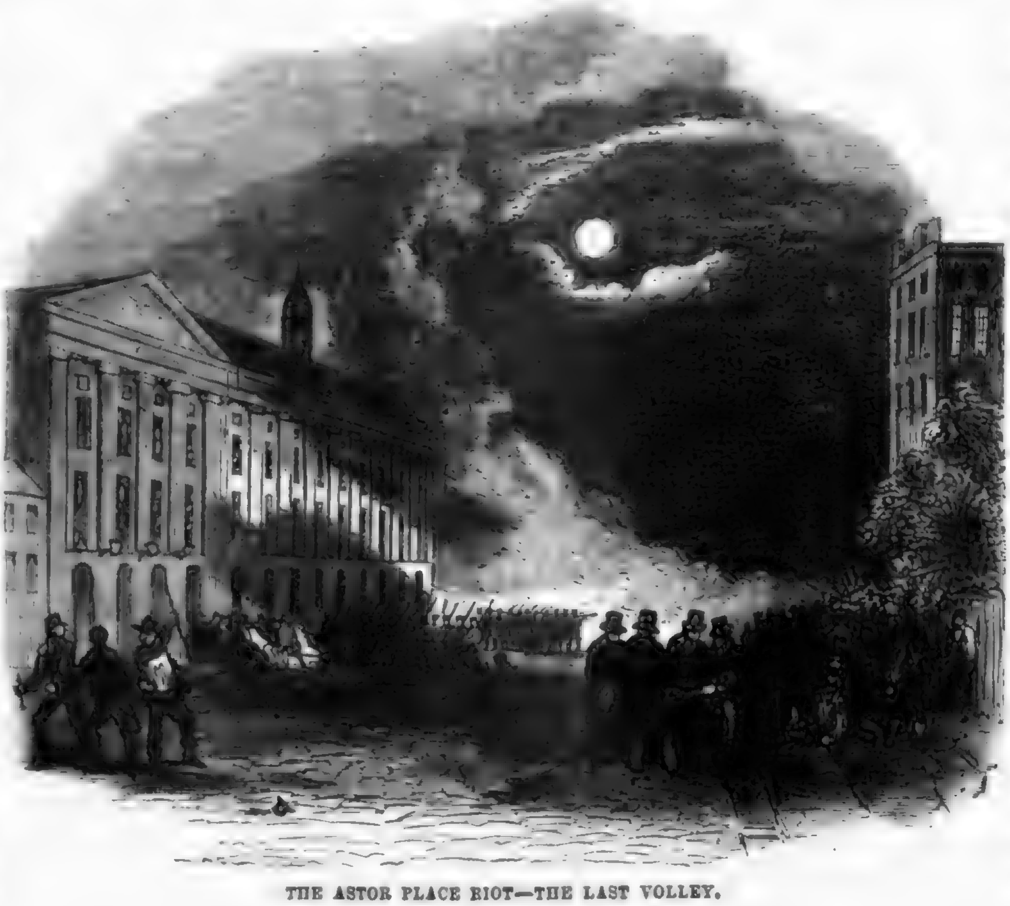


THE ASTOR PLACE RIOT, NEW YORK.

forgotten. That they did not succeed, was probably owing to their lack of theatrical skill, not to any want of dramatic power. A good dramatic poem is not of necessity a success upon the stage. That can only be gained by the dexterous adjustment of a thousand little trifles—and even then nothing is certain. Macready himself says, "The conclusion has been forced upon me, that the most experienced judges cannot with certainty predict the effect in representation of plays which they may hear read or even see rehearsed. Some latent weakness, some deficient link in the chain of interest, imperceptible till in actual presence, will oftentimes balk hopes apparently based on the firmest principles, and baffle judgments respected as oracular."

Macready was an excellent critic. His opinions of Young, Kean and the Kembles are well worth reading. His impression of Edwin Forrest, in 1826, was that, "possessed of natural requisites in no ordinary degree, he might, under careful discipline, confidently look forward to eminence in his profession"; but that he would never submit to a hard course of self-training, as its necessity would never be made apparent to him.

Macready thought M. Fechter's performance of *Othello* shallow, and often in the taste of a small melodramatic theatre. His remarks on Mlle. Mars and Aaron Burr are excellent specimens of condensed criticism. Of Mlle. Mars he adds, "Her voice was music, and the words issuing from her lips suggested to the listener the clear distinctness of a beautiful type upon a rich vellum page."

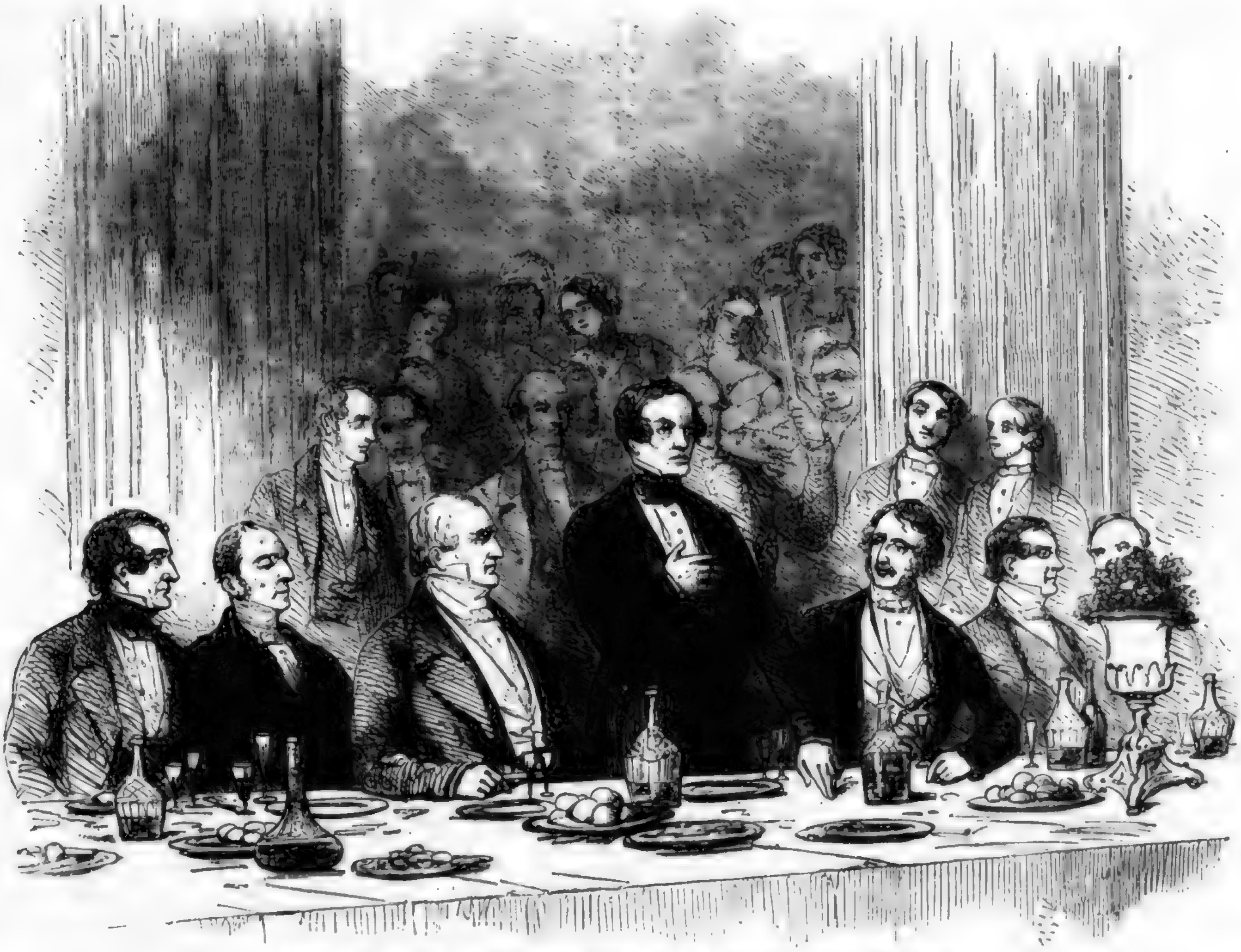


THE ASTOR PLACE RIOT—THE LAST VOLLEY.

He says Aaron Burr, whom he saw in 1826, "looked like a mysterious shadow of an unrepented evil."

He was a stern critic of himself—always analyzing his acting, and rarely satisfied with it. He noted how he had acted day by day. "Acted very ill," he writes, in 1833, and a few days later he says, "A criticism in the *New Monthly*, finding fault with a passage in my *Jaques*, pleased me much, from its truth and good taste."

He was a modest man, and yet with a sense of his own merits. He was ever striving after self-culture. He was familiar with the best authors in the literature of Greece, Rome, Italy and France. Yet, on one occasion, he makes the strange error of crediting to Corneille, instead of Molière, "Le Festin de Pierre"; "which," he adds, "seems to me the best of any of the pieces dramatized on the story of Don Juan."



MACREADY AT THE FAREWELL BANQUET ON HIS RETIRING FROM THE STAGE.

As an actor, Macready's genius was, as Lord Lytton finely said, truly comprehensive, rather than merely versatile. His greatest eulogy will be found in the dedications of the plays to which his skill gave life. He was honest, earnest and able; ever striving for the best, and never satisfied with less. He was dignified, and yet easily ruffled; often, indeed, fretful, but always regretting his irascibility. He was an honest man, and worthy of the praise of *Damis*, in the "Métromanie" of Piron:

> "Excellent caractère,
> Bon ami, bon mari, bon citoyen, bon père."

A BEARISH GOLCONDA.

The clearing and draining of the cypress swamps of the Bay River section of North Carolina, while developing a mine of wealth for the farmer in the rich land reclaimed for agricultural purposes, also reveals some interesting items for the naturalist.

Not long since there was found on South Creek, where some of the best swamp-lands in the State lie, eleven bear-skulls in different stages of preservation, lying so close together in the mud as to attract attention and excite inquiry as to why they should be collected in one spot, as they had evidently not all been deposited there at once by some convulsion of nature.

Curiosity as to the death of the former owners of these skulls was at fault, until a negro noticed some bees flying from an opening in the under part of an old cypress-tree, that leaned over at an angle of some forty-five degrees. Examination showed a swarm of wild bees who had deposited their honey in a hollow about forty feet from the water, and the mystery was at once solved.

The love of bears for honey is well-known to all naturalists and apiarists, and whenever the chance is offered they invariably gorge themselves to repletion with it. The place where the bees entered being on the lower side of the tree, it was at once evident that the bears had either been so badly stung by the bees as to quit their hold and fall into the water, or, "heavy with sweets," had tumbled off and been impaled on the "knees" of the cypress-trees, which stood below like a forest of spears.

These "knees" are excrescences that grow up from the roots of the cypress-trees, often as high as six and seven feet, and are always more or less pointed, and quite sharp enough to impale a body falling from a height of forty feet upon their points; and as they were abundant in that spot, which, until drained, had been inaccessible to man, the "milk in the cocoanut" was accounted for.

As man advances the bears retreat, and are not often

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found near settlements, though it is hard to convince strangers that they, together with rattlesnakes, do not make life dangerous in these unclaimed lands.

Mr. Abbott, a Northern gentleman, who had been for some five years engaged in the timber business near the locality where these eleven skulls were found, had vainly assured his wife that he had neither seen a bear nor a rattlesnake during that period. Nothing could induce her to live there, and he had to content himself with occasional visits to her in her Northern home, hoping gradually to overcome her fear of the "varmints" and reptiles of his Southern one.

At length, after much persuasion, she was induced to pay him a visit, and soon after her arrival at his saw-mill he proposed they should drive over to a farm he had recently purchased, so that she might see the beauties of the country for herself, and be convinced it produced something more than bears and snakes.

They accordingly started with an excellent team, and the lady was soon in raptures at the beauty of the ferns and other swamp vegetation. To keep the roads dry and passable in all weather, they are flanked on either side with ditches for drainage, and immediately beyond these ditches, or, rather, canals, the swamp lies luxuriant in its foliage and undergrowth, but in most places totally inaccessible to man.

When they had gone about half-way the lady saw what she at first supposed was a large Newfoundland dog rush out of the swamp, jump the ditch, and, running directly under the carriage, make for the other side of the road. The single word "bear" from her husband showed the true state of things, but she could not be made to realize that bruin was as badly scared as she was, and quite as anxious to escape her as she was to elude him.

On reaching the farm she was delighted with the profusion of wild-flowers, and, as the clearing was large, and there was no shelter for a bear, was easily induced to take a walk for the purpose of gathering a few. But the fates were against Mr. Abbott. Five years had he lived there without seeing either a bear or a rattlesnake, and on that fatal day he was to see both; for scarcely had they gone a hundred yards before his wife asked him what was that strange singing sound she heard, and to his horror he discovered a rattlesnake ready to strike within a few feet of them.

Instant retreat was the order of the moment, and the next train north bore off Mrs. Abbott from what she still firmly believes to be a country swarming with snakes and "varmints."

BLIND METCALFE, THE ENGINEER.

ONE of the most extraordinary instances of victory over adverse circumstances is found in the career of John Metcalfe, of Knaresborough, England, the well-known engineer and roadmaker. He was deprived of sight by smallpox when only six years old. As a rule, the loss of sight shatters the whole framework of mind and body, and the child grows up selfish and moody, becoming day by day more silent, reserved, nervous and discontented. The very reverse of this was the case with little John Metcalfe. No boy ever entered into the sports of boyhood with a keener relish than he; he was a proficient climber and birds'-nester; he knew how to ride and manage a horse, and enjoy a good gallop; he knew how to swim, and on one occasion saved the lives of three of his companions, and on another the life of a man, after whom he dived to the bottom of the River Nidd four times. Nor was he less apt at indoor than outdoor amusements; he could play the violin with considerable skill, and amuse himself in such a variety of ways that time never hung heavily upon his hands.

As he grew up, he devoted himself to useful pursuits, made a little money, and was rich enough to buy a horse of his own, on which he constantly followed the hounds, and was as bold and daring a rider as any in the field. He even entered for a race, and won it, to the chagrin of many who had laid long odds against him.

Among the feats which proved his courage and sagacity, was a walk from London to Harrowgate, a distance of 200 miles, on an unknown road; and what is more extraordinary, and would be incredible but for the good authority on which the story is told, he accomplished the distance in the same time it took a Colonel Liddell to perform the journey by coach. It should be mentioned the roads were then in a terrible state of dilapidation, rendering coach traveling not only very slow, but very hazardous work. During this journey, with his mind undisturbed by objects which distract or engage the thoughts of seeing men, Metcalfe considered the state of the roads, revolving in his mind whether something might not be done to improve them. Each fresh episode in the journey, each new difficulty—such as deep, marshy places impossible for carriages to pass, rivers without bridges across them, steep declivities with ruts in them sufficient to try the springs of the strongest vehicles—impressed the thought more and more strongly on his mind; and, although when he returned home the time had not yet come for the idea to be fully developed, it was destined at a later period to bear fruit.

In the meantime, he employed himself in a variety of ways in order to procure a livelihood, and, amongst other things, played the violin at dances and public assemblies, kept a vehicle for hire, then started in business as a fish salesman; enlisted, and gained many volunteer recruits; afterward dealt in hosiery, then in horses, and finally became a carrier between Knaresborough and York, starting the first stage-wagon on that road.

LARGEST WORKSHOP IN THE WORLD.

THE last annual report of the establishment of Krupp, of Essen, Germany, gives some interesting facts and figures. The manufacture of cast steel and refined steel alone employs 298 steam engines, 77 large steam hammers, and 8,500 men. It turns out daily 10 miles of rails, with a corresponding amount of wheels, springs, axles, and all the complete steel-work for the railroad carriages. This is Krupp's main contribution to the arts of peace; what he does for the art of war is shown by the fact that he completes 300 large cannon every month, and since 1847 he has turned out over 15,000 cannon.

The establishment is lighted up every night with 21,000 gasburners; its different parts are connected with 37 miles of railway, employing 24 locomotives and 700 cars, while the various offices are connected by 44 telegraph stations. In the mineral works and coal mines outside belonging to the firm, they employ 5,300 workmen. They have built 3,277 dwelling-houses, which are occupied by the workmen and their families, which number 16,200 persons and form a small town, with 22 stores for groceries, meat, clothes, shoes, furniture, and similar daily needs.

Messrs. Krupp have provided for the education of the children of their workmen by 4 primary schools, divided into 21 classes, an industrial school for girls, and a school for adult women, all attended by thousands of learners, and provided with the best teachers.

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OUTSIDE THE WINDOW.

By Nellie C. Hastings.

Within, a tropical splendor,
A noon of color and light;
Without, the roar of the tempest,
In a barren and starless night!
Within, there are silvery voices,
Timed to the mellow keys,
Soaring and sinking together
In tangled harmonies;
And for music without, the wind
Goes wailing in endless pain,
And drives through the leafless branches
The sobbing gusts of the rain.

One stands by the window, watching—
How the faces come and go!
Are they playing the waltz of Weber,
As they played it long ago?
Here, instead of the floating waltzers,
Whirl the withered and ruined leaves—
(Lost! Only the rain is weeping—
Only the night-wind grieves!)
And higher up, in the darkness,
The black clouds hurry by,
In a wild and stormy pageant,
Through the spaces of the sky.

Close by the velvet curtain,
With only a glass between,
Leans one in the glow and the splendor,
Jeweled and draped like a queen.
The spectre out in the darkness
Looks in at her proud, fair face,
And she hears their childhood crying,
Through a long-forgotten space.
"Sister!" she whispers, and, shuddering,
Turns from the glare and the light:
Who knoweth what ghosts are walking
With the wind and the rain to-night?

Now the voice and the keys rise, blended
In a passion of tender pain—
She knows the song and the singer—
She has sung that old refrain!
Once, under the rain of roseleaves,
In the mellow nights of June,
They played with its sweet, sad burden,
Watching the dying moon.
Now, in the wild October,
One listens, with tearless eyes,
To the sad old foolish burden,
Of a love that never dies!

The lights are quenched in the windows,
The last wheel rolls away;
And the dancers go hurrying homeward,
Out of the dawning day.
Through the gray eastern portals
The shafts of the sunrise creep;
The singer—his song forgotten—
Smiles in a dreamless sleep.
And the shadow that stood at the window
Lies where the dead leaves lie—
A ghost that is laid for ever—
A dream that has flitted by!

LINDORIS'S WIFE.

She stood at the far end of the long drawing-room, like a lily rising from its sheath, this superb white woman, in her superb green clothes; stood leaning one perfect arm on the tall malachite pedestal, whose green bronze Mercury sprang god-like, slender, shooting up far above her tall head—for Cidney Godwin was

> "A daughter of the gods, divinely tall
> And most divinely fair."

And in those sea-green draperies clinging about her, with her tawny Guercino hair drooping low without a flower; with her exquisite neck gemless, and her two arms bare—she is a woman whom most men would esteem; at the least, well worth looking at.

Miss Godwin is reading a letter, apparently with some slight amused interest, for a half-smile shows the dimple in her round chin and the whiteness of her small, square teeth.

Presently, through the heavy curtains, which serve as doorways in the Palmer mansion, the pretty *dame chatelaine*, Cidney's hostess, makes her appearance.

"Who is it from?—oh, Cidney!" the little matron says, a sigh chasing her ready smiles. "One could read that handwriting a mile off. Why *will* you persist in receiving that man's attentions? I can't endure him!"

"Oh, Floy, dear, it amuses me; and can't you endure him? Why? I am sure Lindoris is what you usually demand my admirers shall be—handsome, highbred, money, a Bayard in devotion, and a Chesterfield in courtesy—the favorite of women, the envy of men—*que voulez vous de plus, ma belle?*"

"Nothing more, Cidney, but something less. My dear girl, Geoffrey Lindoris is a married man, and I can't bear to know that your name is bandied about the clubs as his latest flame; that is why I honestly object to this constant intercourse—these daily and nightly attentions."

"I go about with Carter just as much as with Lindoris."

"I know you do; but, Cidney, Carter has not a wife, and Geoffrey Lindoris has."

"Where is his wife?" Miss Godwin asks, with his last note almost against her lips; she has a lovely voice, full of tremulous, exquisite possibilities—a voice that, just for mere curious pleasure's sake, one would like to hear uttering the love-words of our rich English.

"That's the worst of it!" Mrs. Palmer exclaims, warmly, pacing up and down the room in all her Paris glory of silk and silver. "Nobody knows—there's some mystery, or—or—something. Oh, Cidney, dear, you have enough men at your feet! In mercy to this wife, wherever or whoever she may be—in respect to yourself—teach this man that there is one woman in the world who holds the attentions of a married man too cheap for her acceptance."

The little flushed matron stops, with lurking tears in her eyes, in front of Cidney, who is sitting on a low ottoman, leaning forward, with her chin resting in her hands. Presently she looks up into her friend's eager face with two fearless eyes, a little paler maybe than she was five minutes since, but she speaks very quietly, very firmly.

"Millie, I cannot."

"You cannot! Oh, Cidney, it is not possible that you—I—— No, no; I will not even say it, Cidney, darling!"—little, tender Millie, with a sudden sweep of recollection of her own love for her Harry, drops on her knees beside

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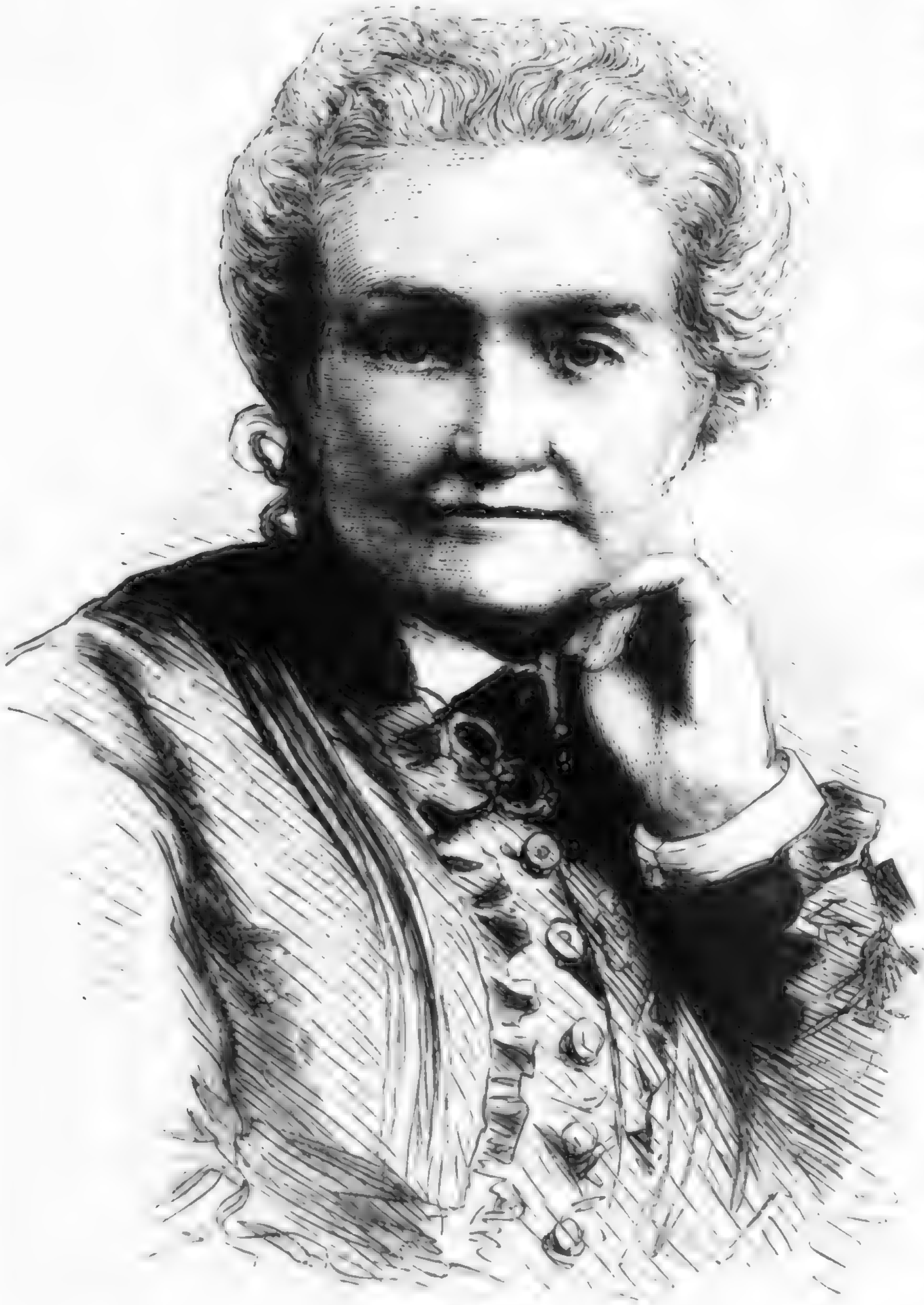


CHARLOTTE CUSHMAN.

her friend and puts her arms around her. "It's hard, dear, but don't you know, for your own sake, for *his* sake, then, you ought to send him away from you?"

"Useless, Millie, dear." Miss Godwin puts away the caressing arms with a short, hard laugh. "I have thrown down the plank—let me walk over it. Surely you can trust me—you may, Millie, for I can trust myself." Her voice softens as she finishes.

"But what is to be the end of all this?" cries Millie, sore distressed. "I wish you had staid in England and never come back to America!"

"Do you, cousin mine? I do not. My chiefest ambition, ever since father died and left me so utterly alone, has been to get back to the country I called 'home,' although I had no recollection of it!"

"What a curious life you've had, Cidney! Well, your father, from all Harry says, was a very curious man; he left his property in the hands of some total stranger, did not he?"

"Yes—that is to say, a total stranger to me, not to him. And not three months after his death, my guardian and administrator threw up his situation in disgust and left England."

"Have you never heard from him?"

"No; why should I? I became a ward of Chancery, *pro tem.*, and now I am my own mistress—twenty-four, and a very bad girl—eh! Millie mine?"

She smooths back the little matron's curly hair, and smiles down into her troubled face.

"No, no; not bad, Cidney—but I wish Geoffrey Lindoris had no wife."

"I dare say he would echo that sentiment."

"What sentiment? Madame, mademoiselle, your most obedient." Geoffrey Lindoris stands before them, hat in hand. "Am I on time?"

"Five minutes early," Miss Godwin answers, glancing at the clock.

"Ah, you know, over-punctuality is my failing where you are concerned."

"Where can Harry be?"

Mrs. Palmer sweeps away to hurry her liege lord from his dressing-room.

"You are looking charmingly to-night, Miss Godwin."

She has not even risen at his entrance, but looks up now with a slow, scornful smile. He draws another hassock near to her, and seats himself.

"I must play Turk, I suppose, to my sultana. That green is just your color—perfect. No ornaments? What a woman! Last night a blaze of diamonds, to-night not so much as a rosebud. To-morrow you may wear home-spun, and I shall think you still fairer than ever before."

"Have you finished?" she asks, with uplifted, supercilious brows.

"Finished! I have not yet begun." There is latent fire in his gray eyes, drowsing passion in his voice.

"Oblige me by changing the subject of conversation, then; you surely know that I abhor personal remarks. They are so excessively commonplace. Do try a little originality, Mr. Lindoris, just by way of variety."

"You are a remarkable woman."

"Do you think so?"

"I do."

"What a singularly mediocre set of women you must have known in your day!"

He laughs.

"I think not. Yes, you are remarkable. Most people would not credit you with much heart, Miss Godwin, and yet I—although I appreciate your head to the full—think you one of the few women capable of a great love."

"Indeed! And no doubt you are a most experienced judge of the matter."

"Experience has taught me to value a pure and lovely, a lovable and perfect, woman—now that I have met her—if it has taught me nothing else."

He is not looking at Cidney Godwin—he is staring hard, with strained eyes, at vacancy. And she?—surely there is a little flush of pleasure on the exquisite pallor of her face.

"We're off, Cidney!" Mrs. Palmer's cozy face peeps in a moment, *en route* to her carriage and Mrs. Howland's german. "I suppose you and Mr. Lindoris will follow soon?"

"Coming, Millie."

And in a moment, after he has folded her wrap around her, they are off also.

"Where is Geoffrey Lindoris's wife?" "Who is, or was, she?" "Why is she not here with him?" "Why is he not there with her?"

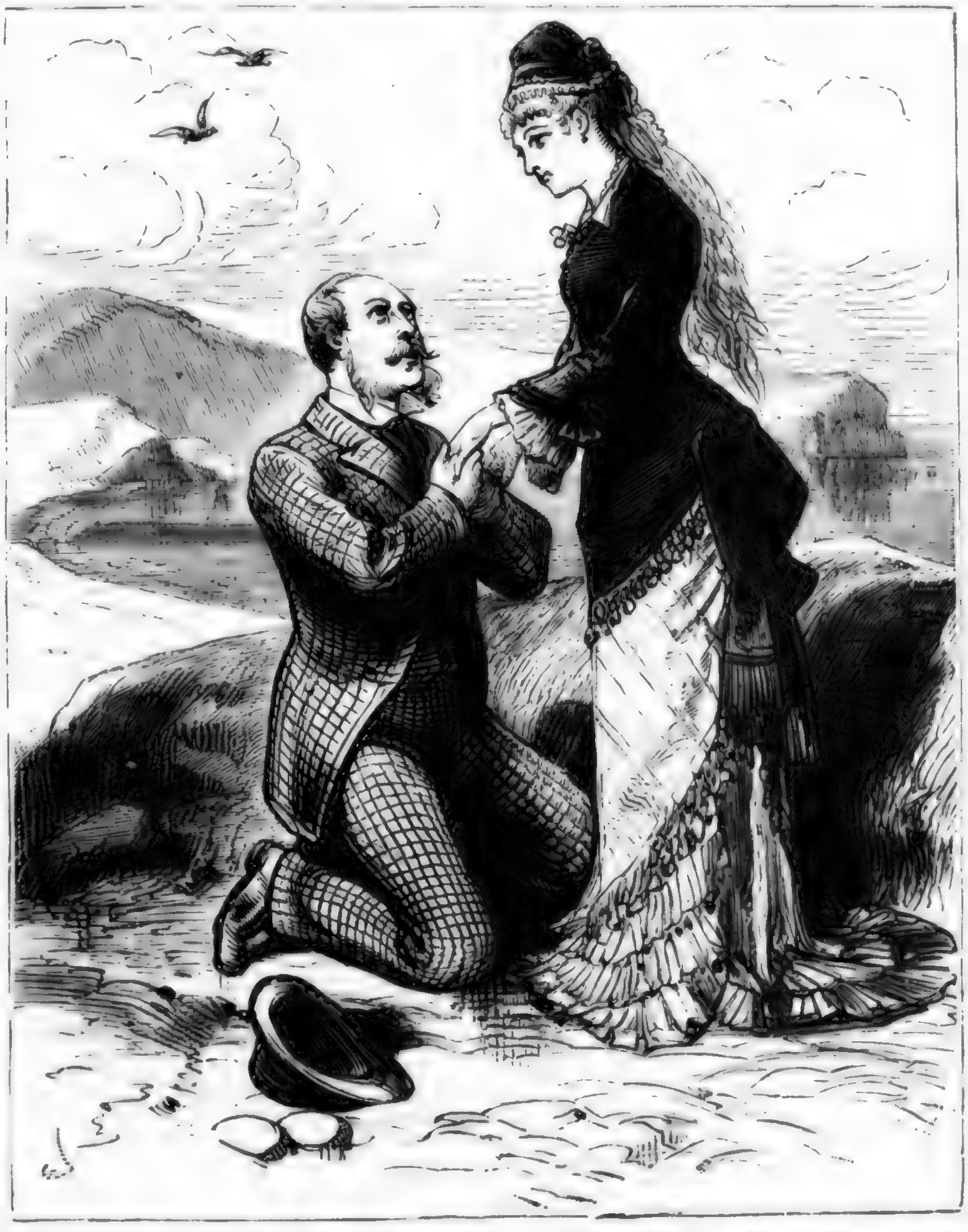
Such and such are the questions society is almost tired of asking itself; but to them all there comes no answer. No one knows anything about her, and presently society is quite content to bask in his smiles, drink his wines, accept his attentions, ride behind his horses, and have its heart broken by his constant devotions.

According to society, Cidney Godwin is going the thing with rather more recklessness than any previous woman, and also Lindoris is perhaps more absorbed than by any of the innumerable hithertos.

Be that as it may, it is absolutely certain that, for eight long months, Geoffrey Lindoris has been constant to this new divinity through a New York half-season, following her to Washington for two months, back to New York, thence to Saratoga, the White Mountains, and to-day they are at Newport, both guests of Mrs. Palmer; for poor little Millie, since Cidney sees fit to tread the broad path, is determined that her husband's cousin shall tread it beneath her own grieving and watchful eyes.

If Miss Godwin was reckless last Winter, Mrs. Grundy must needs coin some new word for her misdoings this Summer. Lindoris is never absent from her side one moment: long *tête-à-tête* drives in the phaeton, without a footman, in the mornings; conventional drives up and down the avenue in the afternoons, or devious rides on horseback to the Glen, or off into the country, of which neither is able to give the most lucid accounts on their return. They always dance together—Geoffrey Lindoris has not danced, in fact, with any other woman in months—and then they are in the house together! How many nameless small opportunities for meeting, for exchanging thoughts, or merely words! Poor Millie is almost distracted, but she keeps up a brave appearance, takes the initiative herself, and invariably speaks of them in the same breath.

'Tis a lazy sort of day. There is a soft haze over the land and sea. The waves lap over each other lovingly, and there is not air enough to sail a toy-boat.



LINDORIS'S WIFE.—"'MY WHOLE NAME IS BERTHA CIDNEY LANGHAM. MY UNCLE ADOPTED ME; I TOOK THE NAME OF GODWIN—AND—AND——' HE IS KNEELING ON THE ROCKS BEFORE HER. 'YOU! YOU! MY WIFE!' 'I—BELIEVE—I—AM!'"—SEE PAGE 103.

Morning, too—perhaps eleven o'clock—and not any one, except two or three children and a nursery-maid, on the beach, besides Geoffrey Lindoris and Cidney Godwin. The reins hang loosely over the dashboard. Poppet and Peacock may have their way and "gang their ain gait," slow enough, up and down—up and down the long stretch of smooth sand, while the breath of the sea, so salt and fine, fans softly over the drivers' faces.

There has been long silence between Cidney and Lindoris, and the latter breaks it. He takes, quietly but very firmly, in his her two hands.

"Cidney, my love, look at me—so! I love you—love you as a man loves but once. I never said it to a woman before, although, God help me! I suppose I made them think it. But listen to me just a little while, and condemn me after it, if you will. Ten years ago I was in England, and late one evening a dispatch was sent me at my club, asking me to go at once to the bedside of a dying friend, Colonel Langham. I, of course, went. Langham saved my life once, Cidney, at the imminent risk of his own. My friend was indeed dying, surrounded by lawyers, physicians, nurses, a priest, and a weeping little girl—a tiny thing, whose face I scarcely saw. He told me she was fourteen, and his only child, the heiress of his immense fortune. He asked me to be his sole executor, and to marry then and there the little girl who knelt crying at the other end of the room. He would listen to no reason either from lawyers, physicians, clergyman or myself—represented the utterly lonely position of his daughter, and finally brought up the debt of life that I most certainly owed him. Cidney, I was married to Bertha Langham that evening, and a couple of hours afterward her father died. From that hour to this I have never seen the girl's face, have never held the slightest communication with her. Two months later her mother's brother came to England; she became his ward, for I had legally relinquished my guardian and executorships." He stops short and fetches a deep sigh—such sighs as are so much more sorrowful than woman's, for they are so much seldomer—and adds: "I only know that she lives, and is the bar sinister in my life. Cidney, have you no pity for me?"

Oh, despairing strong voice, make not your appeal so pleadingly, lest her two arms fold in for ever to bless your sorrow and regretting!

For a moment she is still, and then, with a look far out to sea, Cidney answers:

"And how about the woman?"

"The woman! What woman?"

"Your wife."

"Oh, yes! I never think of her as a woman—only as a weeping child."

"She cannot have staid a weeping child for ten years, although she may be a most wretched woman. Did you never think of that? She may love, and may curse the hour that made her your wife as bitterly as you can do. Did you never think of how forlorn, how desperate she may have been all these ten years gone?"

His hands have loosed from hers, his face is buried in his hands. Poppet and Peacock have come to a dead stand-still before Purgatory.

"God Almighty, no!" he says, at last, drawing a hard breath. "But"—recovering himself and turning to her—"see here: in a way, after a fashion, we are both free, she to marry whom she pleases, I—to offer a tarnished name to one who deserves a spotless one. Oh, Cidney, my darling, in the eyes of the world, ten years of separation have freed me and her both—will you stoop to take me?"

"I love you!" she says, simply and unresisting. His arms are around her, while the waves creep closer up the sands to listen to their broken words, and while the solitary nursery-maid, for the nonce neglectful of her three young charges, is lost in amazement at the remarkable social customs of the sojourner at Newport-on-the-Sea.

The engagement is not "announced"—that is, to any one save Millie and Harry. Poor Millie, after a few showers of tears, finally utters fervent thanksgivings to Providence that it is no worse, and is only grieved—kind, womanly little soul!—that there is to be no wild wedding preparations, no guests, no breakfast, no reception—nothing. She ventures to express the wish to her husband that Cidney might have "taken it into her head to fall in love with an unmarried man, so that there might have been a regular wedding, and a swell affair all through!" But outwardly the pretty matron is all smiles and silence, for the affair is as yet a profound secret—such is Miss Godwin's desire.

"Cidney, when will you marry me?" Geoffrey Lindoris asks, three weeks after that memorable day when he and Miss Godwin so shocked the nursery-maid's ideas of propriety.

"Never!" she says, with a laugh, throwing her white arms up over her head, as she half lies, half sits on the cliff-rocks by Bailey's Beach.

"Don't jest with me about that," he says a little sternly, putting his arm around her and drawing her to him. "Tell me when, my sweetheart?"

"In a year or two," she laughs again, and turns her willing face to his kisses.

"I forbade your jesting with me on this affair. A year or two! You will marry me next week."

"Next week!" she echoes, scornfully. "I would as soon marry you to-morrow as next week."

"So you shall, then!" he cries, triumphantly. "You have set our wedding-day, my darling."

There is no remonstrance, or smile even, on her face—only for a moment a curious look, as though she were remembering some cruel thing, and then for ever putting it away from her.

"Geoffrey!"—she has moved away from his reach, and is sitting straightly—"you do not know exactly all about me. My whole name is Bertha Cidney Langham. My uncle adopted me; I took his name of Godwin, and—and——"

He is kneeling on the rocks before her.

"*You! you! my wife!*"

"I—believe—I—am!"

"Great God! Cidney! Cidney! can you forgive me!"

"I love you!" she answers him again, quietly.

"And to think that I might have had you for ten years—ten years out of a man's life is a great deal, Cidney! My wife! my wife!"

He turns away, shuddering with the bitter knowledge of his lost half-score.

"Geoffrey!"

She goes over and lays her hand upon him.

"Yes, my darling!"

"Are not you happy—have not you me now?"

"Have not I you? By the Lord, I have! Happy! I look into your eyes, and see the only heaven I believe in. But, oh, Cidney! those lost ten years, when I might——"

She closes his lament with her lips.

To-morrow society is simply stunned with two pieces of information, viz.: that Mr. Geoffrey Lindoris's wife is in Newport, and that she has heretofore been known as Cidney Godwin—and society thinks it now knows why he was so attentive to her from the very first time he saw her until the present moment.

Cidney is alternately commiserated and congratulated—but Cidney is happy, and has almost banished from her husband's recollection his lost half-score.

POUNDEXTER'S VOW.

"I vow I'LL marry!"

Not a very desperate case, in the common acceptation of the word; but could you have seen Poundexter's face after he uttered this vow, you would have been sure that he had received nothing less than a warning of his speedy demise. A more woebegone expression cannot easily be imagined. Terror, anger and sorrow were about equally blended; and one would have guessed his age at fifty, when, in reality, he was not over thirty-five.

If there was one thing that he disliked more than another, it was matrimony; and he had managed to escape it so long, that he felt quite secure, and was, therefore, quite careless. He could not recollect when he had uttered the word *marry*, without the little prefix *never*; and he was startled when he realized the nature of his vow.

He looked cautiously at the doors, to see that they were

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closed, and at the windows, to make sure that no impertinent listener was near—he occupied rooms in the second story—and then he felt easier. His face gradually assumed its natural, and by no means forbidding, aspect, and at last broke into smiles, as he thought how frightened he had been.

"I vow I won't marry!" was his first thought. "I guess no one overheard me. And what if they did? A man can change his mind, if he wants to, as well as—a woman. Mine is changed, most certainly; but I really feel sorry and ashamed that I have expressed myself so foolishly."

You may think that Nicholas Poundexter was a very fickle-minded man; but he was not. Every one who has the pleasure of his acquaintance knows that there is not a man living that clings to the old ways more closely than Poundexter. Fickle! Far from it! Why, he has occupied the same rooms for at least ten years; and has taken the same paper, and read it at the same hour, for more than ten years. He takes his meals at the same table that he sat to a dozen years ago; and in all that time he has not changed the brand of his cigars, or the color of his wine, or his determination never to marry. If there was any fickleness about him, it was when he made the vow, and not when he retracted it. He stepped from the old track; and, when he found he was wrong, stepped back again.

"No, I won't marry!" he continued, while pulling on his boots. "I can't see for my life what ever caused me to think of it! Humph! I guess I won't!"

Poundexter's thoughts were running a little wild. He very well knew that the little billet lying right before him was the whole cause of his foolishness; yet it was nothing but a request for his attendance at Mrs. Hazleton's reception—a request that must be complied with, for Mrs. Hazleton was a Poundexter. He had also promised.

Now, the reception itself he cared nothing about; but the thousand little annoyances (attentions) that he should meet, and which he was vain enough to believe were all so many baits on the matrimonial hook, seemed a little more than he had courage to face. He had half a mind to plead illness; but that would not do, for he was never known to be sick a day in his life. His imagination then conjured up a room full of ladies, young and old, coming to inquire after the health of "poor Mr. Poundexter." No, that would never do! After racking his brain for other expedients, all of which were rejected, he decided that he must go. And this gave rise to the thoughts that prompted his vow.

"I vow I'll marry! Then the women would scarcely look at me, and I might go where I pleased, without having so many soft glances thrown at me, so many soft sighs, such bewildering smiles. Bah!"

But, as Poundexter could not marry in time to escape the trouble that then threatened him, he concluded not to marry at all.

For some reason, Poundexter did not feel quite so comfortable as usual. That foolish vow haunted him. He had never made but one other. Had he fulfilled it? Perhaps he was thinking of this. At all events, he was troubled the entire day; and almost the last thing at night was a thought of the vow. Yet he closed his eyes obstinately, and declared again and again that he would never marry.

But closed eyes did not bring sleep. For the first time in a dozen years, he was lying awake in bed when the clock struck twelve. Try as he would, his eyes were wide open, staring into the darkness. Nothing was right. The night was too warm; the clothing too heavy; the room too dark; the clock ticked too loud, and too fast. He got it into his head that if it did not tick at all, he could sleep. So he got up, and groped his way toward the door leading to the other room.

"Confound the clock! it never ticked so loudly before! I'll stop it!"

He felt around, and at last found the catch that secured the door to the little timepiece; but he changed his mind just then. Take care, Poundexter! You will surely acquire a character for fickleness.

He started back toward the bedroom.

"I'll let it run; it never has failed me yet. I guess I'm nervous. Hallo! what's this?"

The room was flooded with a light so intense that Poundexter was forced to cover his eyes, and shut out the brilliancy. When at last he could bear the light, he looked up, and saw written upon the wall, in letters of dazzling, flaming fire, "*Remember your vow!*"

With shrieks of terror, he turned and fled from the room, closing and bolting the door, overturning stools and chairs in his frenzied haste to escape the fearful sight.

"Bless me! this is awful!—this is terrible!" exclaimed poor Poundexter, the perspiration falling from his face in great drops, and his teeth chattering with a sound not unlike the click, click, click of the telegraph.

"Remember the vow? I vow I shall never forget it!"

For an hour or more he dared not enter the bedroom; but as he heard no sounds whatever, and imagined that the great light had been removed, he at last found courage to open the door and look in. All dark and quiet, and not even a sulphurous smell. He lighted the gas, and examined the room thoroughly, but found nothing wrong; so he went to bed and slept.

In the morning he thought of the vow, and the singular visitation; but, his courage and obstinacy returning with daylight, he had the hardihood to declare that he would remember the vow, but would never marry.

Ah, Poundexter! Is that the way you keep your word?

To see Nicholas Poundexter in Mrs. Hazleton's elegant parlors, bowing to the fair hostess, and smiling so pleasantly as he passed through the crowded rooms, one would not suppose that he had ever been scared in all his life—that a great fear was even then weighing upon his mind.

"Remember your vow!" How the words haunted him!

"If I should have to!" thought he. "Bless me! what a simpleton I was! But if I should have to—marry!"

He looked cautiously at the guests that thronged the rooms, as though he could tell the fair one destined for him. He saw the one that he would have chosen, if a choice had been allowed; but he had the impression that if he was coerced into the fulfillment of his vow, he would also be required to take the fair one allotted to him. What a predicament for a man who didn't want to marry!

He became intensely uncomfortable. The ladies smothered him with attentions, and the gentlemen bored him. The rooms were too full, and insufferably hot; yet he dreaded to leave them, for the darkness had terrors since those flaming letters appeared to him. Anything, however, seemed preferable to the misery he was then enduring, and he passed into the grove. He found a spot quite secure from intrusion, and, lighting his cigar, gave himself up to the enjoyment of the hour.

"*Remember your vow!*"

A voice, low, distinct and sepulchral, sounded right at his very elbow—a voice that thrilled him through and through, and made every hair of his head erect with fear. Without stopping to see from whence the sound proceeded, he sprang to his feet and fled from the spot, nor looked once behind. But the voice pursued him.

"Remember your vow!" sounded at his side, behind him, above him, and before him. Go whither he would, he heard the awful words, and, half dead with fright, he cleared the door of the house.

"Remember your vow!" was whispered in his ear, as he stopped for one moment in the hall; and with renewed terror he bounded up the stairs at a speed that threatened to upset him. He reached the landing, and paused again. He had escaped. The voice did not follow him there. He did not breathe much easier, however, for there was but little breath left; but a few moments' rest enabled him to put on a calm exterior, and he re-entered the parlors as smiling as ever.

"I shall be compelled to marry," was the conclusion that was forced upon him. "If I could only choose, myself! However, I'll wait a while. Bless me! I can't wait long, if I'm haunted in this manner! If I could only choose a—a—wife! Bless me! how odd it seems!"

Half an hour later he was sitting on the balcony, conversing very pleasantly with a trio of ladies; but, at the same time, he was stoutly declaring in his own mind that nothing could ever induce him to marry.

"If the red-hot letters meet me every night, and the awful voice follows me day and night, I'll hold to this resolution. But, if I'm obliged to marry, I should prefer the lady who is now advancing toward me. I'll turn my head, and see if she will speak."

"Mr. Poundexter——"

"Ah, Miss Forman, I was just thinking of you"—Poundexter was always truthful. "I received a letter from Captain Rainer, and he requested me to say to you that he had found what he was seeking."

Poundexter looked quite sharply into the face of Clara Forman. He saw nothing to disturb his peace; but he did feel somewhat curious to know what this was that the handsome captain was seeking.

"If this Captain Rainer (he's a good fellow for a companion, but a rascally rival) hasn't a prior claim, I should prefer Clara Forman for a wife, provided that I conclude to take one."

A BEARISH GOLCONDA.— SEE PAGE 101.

Poundexter certainly had very good taste, for Clara Forman was decidedly the most dazzlingly beautiful woman in Mrs. Hazleton's parlors. Poundexter thought as much; and, for the first time in his life, wondered whether he was good-looking or not. He certainly was not bad-looking; and the idea which had somehow got abroad that he was a little fast, did not injure him in the least.

"If I ever marry, I think I'll take this woman leaning on my arm" (he was taking Clara down to supper) "if she does not object. What lovely eyes! I never thought a woman could be so fascinating. And such lips! If I ever marry, I don't think I could do better than take Miss Clara. I think, too, that I shall marry. I'm almost certain I shall."

Don't think Poundexter unstable if I tell you that, half an hour later, he solemnly declared: "I'll never, never marry! No, not if a whole volume of flaming letters is stuck up in my bedroom!"

He was just stepping into the carriage when he made this firm resolve, and the thoughts had scarcely taken shape when that mysterious voice sounded in his ear:

"Remember your vow!"

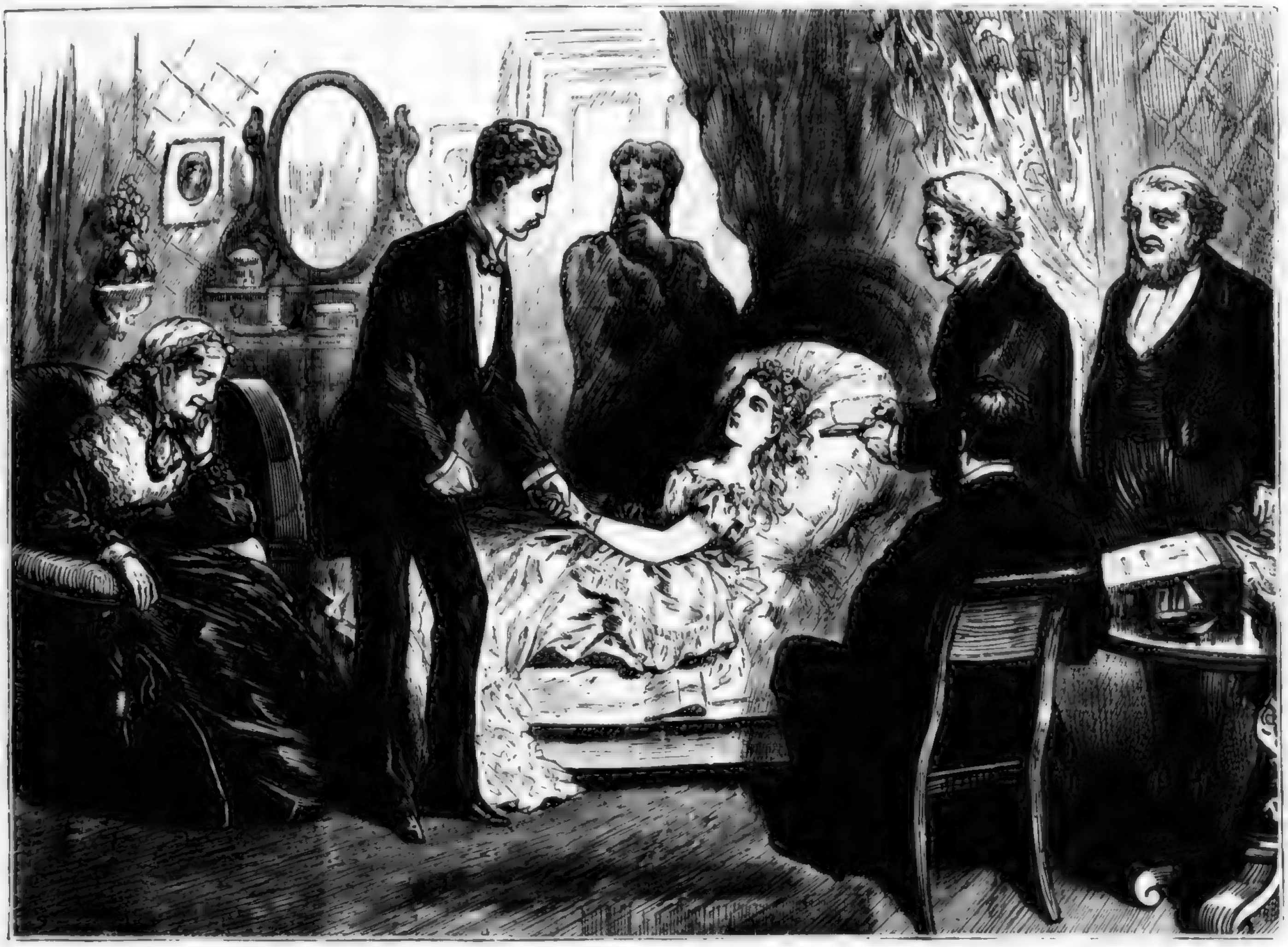
The same voice—and surely in the coach—as low, distinct and sepulchral as ever.

"Drive! drive!" he shouted to the coachman. The coachman did drive; but when Poundexter alighted in front of his own home, the voice spoke again:

"Remember your vow!"

A key never turned a lock quicker than Poundexter's did then, and a door was never opened and closed quicker. He felt but a trifle more secure when inside.

"I guess I shall be obliged to marry; but I really should like the privilege of choosing my wife. This forcing one to marry, and then forcing one to take a woman that he does not—ahem!—love, is—is—confounded provoking, to say the least. I wonder if I shall see the fiery paragraph to-night? But what do I care for it? It can't hurt me. Pooh! But I guess I'll not take the trouble to go to bed to-night. It is quite late. Marry! I guess I won't! Not if a fiery paragraph meets—— Ha! what's that? Somebody in my bedroom! Robbers!"



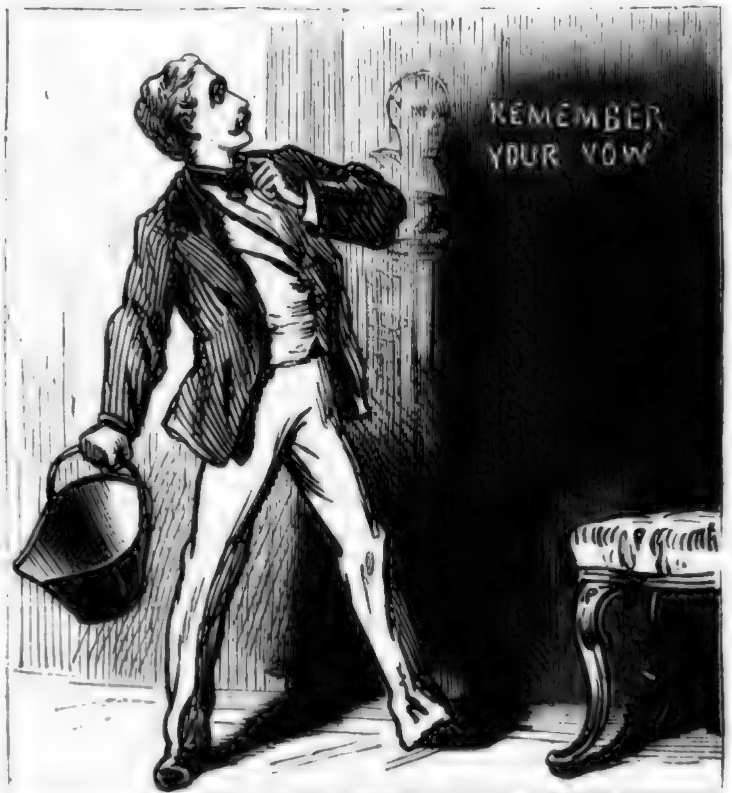
POUNDEXTER'S VOW.—"LYING ON THE BED WAS A YOUNG WOMAN, WITH BRIDAL ROBES COVERING HER PERFECT FORM. AT THE BEDSIDE SAT FATHER AND MOTHER, WHILE AT THE WINDOW WAS THE VENERABLE CLERGYMAN AND THE GOOD PHYSICIAN—ALL WAITING. THE STRANGE GUIDE LED POUNDEXTER TO HER COUCH AND PLACED THE INVALID'S HAND WITHIN HIS OWN."—SEE PAGE 106.

Poundexter forgot his vow and matrimonial thoughts in a twinkling. To think that any one could have the audacity to enter his apartments while he was away! It was without precedent.

It is somewhat strange that he did not think of another ghostly visitation, from the fact that the sounds came from the bedroom; but he did not, until he had grasped the coal-scuttle, the only weapon of defense within reach, and posted himself beside the door. The door opening so noiselessly, when he knew that it had creaked unmercifully for a week or more, startled him; but he kept his place.

Wider, wider, wider opened the door, yet not a creak from those dry hinges — not a sound from the bedroom.

Poundexter stood there in an attitude of attack, the coal-scuttle all ready, and waiting, but no one appeared.



"HIS EYES TURNED TOWARD THE DOOR, THE COAL-SCUTTLE DRAGGING HEAVILY ON HIS RIGHT ARM."

"I wish he would come," thought Poundexter. "This old scuttle is growing heavy. I believe the tongs would have been sufficient. I wish I had 'em." He looked wistfully across the room at the coveted tongs; but they would not come to him, and he could not go to them without passing the open door, so he was forced to content himself with the coal-scuttle.

It seemed an age that he waited there, his eyes turned toward the door, and the coal-scuttle dragging so heavily on his right arm. Not a sound came from the bedroom. All was as still as the grave. Taking courage from this, he resolved to make a forward movement. Bracing himself for the charge, and raising his voice to its loudest tone, he shouted:

"Who is in my bedroom?"

At the same moment he made a rush through the open door. If any one had been unfortunate

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enough to have been in that bedroom, they would have been very much frightened; but the sight that met Poundexter's eyes was more terrifying to him than a score of robbers. Right before him, and apparently coming toward him, were those flaming letters, hissing, seething hot, and longer than the room; while coming from the room he had just left was that awful voice, deeper and more unearthly: "Remember your vow!"

Besieged before and behind, Poundexter knew not which way to turn, so he dropped on his knees and begged for time.

"Remember your vow!" was the answer, repeated again and again, all the while growing less distinct, and at last ceasing entirely. At the same time the letters were receding from him—they were blended into one ball of fire, which still receded, leaving nothing but a point of light, and this soon vanished in total darkness.

Poundexter gazed in wonder and awe at this ending of the mysterious visitation; and when the whole had vanished, he arose, much relieved, yet very nervous.

"I vow, I guess I must marry, or drown myself. There is not much choice, unless I can have Clara Forman. I wonder if she is extravagant? I have five thousand a year. That ought to buy a great many nicknacks; and I could double it by a little exertion. I don't use over one-third of it. It ought to keep us, with what she will have. I guess I'll try it. At any rate, if I must marry, I'll marry the one I want, or I'll not marry at all. Who'll frighten me into it, I'd like to know?"

Very decided was Mr. Poundexter. During the hours of daylight you could not have found, in the whole city, a man more averse to matrimony; but as the sun went down he began to think of the terrible voice, the letters of fire, and Clara Forman.

"If I could only have the choice of a wife, I should not be so averse to this matrimonial state," thought Poundexter, as he strolled leisurely toward home; "but this being forced into it without a word to say in the matter, is—— Well, I won't marry, and that is all there is about it. No, not if an extra edition of that fiery paragraph is issued. I won't marry! I'm determined, and I don't know but that I am a little desperate; but I won't marry; *that—is—so!*"

He thrust his hands very deep in his pockets, and stepped along very firmly; but had gone a few squares only, when that voice from the other world (?) greeted him:

"Poundexter, remember your vow!"

It was not dark, yet there was no form visible from whence the voice could have come; and there was no place of concealment, for Poundexter satisfied himself on that point, much to the amusement of some gentlemen who had been attracted to the spot by his singular conduct, and much to his own amazement.

"I might have known better than to have prowled about this gentleman's yard in search of such an *ignis fatuus*. Upon my word, it's the Forman place! I must offer an apology for my rudeness. Ah, here is Forman now; and, no doubt, has been looking at me all the while. I wonder if they think I'm crazy? More than half right, if they do."

"Good-evening, Forman."

Quite a broad smile overspread Forman's face, as he returned the salutation.

"Can I assist you in your search, Poundexter?"

"Thank you, Forman; but I guess it was only an illusion. I was so very sure that I heard some one speak to me, that I made bold to enter your grounds and search for the speaker."

"Remember your vow!" came in slow, distinct tones.

"There it is again, Forman! Did you hear it?" exclaimed Poundexter, looking all around, and even stepping about, to make sure he was not treading on the speaker. "Did you hear it?"

"Very distinctly, Poundexter."

"There is no use hunting for it," said Poundexter; "it is supernatural. I hear the same voice every night; it is wearing my life away; but I cannot escape it."

"Tush, tush! You are losing your wits," said Forman. "Come in and dine; no one but the family. So, you hear this voice every night? Have you ever made a vow?"

"Between you and me, Forman, I did make one," said Poundexter, very confidentially. "It was very foolish, but I supposed no one heard it. Since then, I have been haunted, sir, by this mysterious voice."

"What was the vow, Poundexter?"

"I vowed that I would marry; but you who know me so well do not believe that I was serious. Nor was I; and I assure you that I never shall marry. There! you have the whole of it, Mr. Forman, and so let it rest. I never shall marry."

A moment later, he fell to thinking again.

"If I ever should marry, I certainly would prefer Clara Forman."

He caught sight of her through the open door of the parlor; and when he entered the room, he added a little to these thoughts.

"I think I shall marry. I know I should, if I had the privilege," etc., tapping his head, as though the remainder of the remark was treasured there.

He did not change his mind during the entire evening, for he enjoyed Clara Forman's society exceedingly.

"Beautiful! beautiful!" thought he, as he stood by her side, turning the music. "Handsome as—as my near chestnut, and he can't be beat for beauty in this little world!"

This was the highest praise that Poundexter could bestow; for he had never yet found anything, animate or inanimate, that was half so beautiful as the chestnut roadster. At least, so he declared; but at last he had found his equal.

Ah, Poundexter! have you forgotten another Clara, whose beauty eclipsed even the beauty of the woman you are now looking upon so admiringly? Remember! Remember!

Poundexter went home very well satisfied with himself, and had no thoughts of altering his mind until he stood at his own door, thrusting the key into the lock. A lady just across the way was gently reproving her liege lord for his late hours, and the night being very still, Poundexter unintentionally overheard it.

"Humph! late! why, it's not past eleven!" muttered Poundexter. "Bless me! I wonder if they all do so? I won't marry, not even Clara Forman!"

He forgot to turn the key in the lock, so frightened was he when he thought how near he had been to the brink.

"Never! never!" he exclaimed, grasping the door-knob nervously; but the door did not yield, and his face came in contact with its varnished surface in no very gentle manner.

"Bless me, but that was a bump! However, I'll not marry, so sure as my name is Nicholas Poundexter!" and so he continued to declare all the way up the stairs, and into his own room.

He locked the door very carefully, and threw the key upon the table; but before he could light the gas, there arose such a din in the bedroom that poor Poundexter thought the whole house was falling upon him. He clapped his hands to his head, to ward off any stray timber that might come near him, and rushed for the door. It was fastened, and he could not remember where he had put the key. Turning from the door, he made a rush for the sofa, and stowed himself away beneath it, shrieking:

"Mercy! mercy! mercy!"

The bedroom door began slowly to open, and the room became flooded with a light brighter than the sun. Then he knew that this awful clamor was only another visitation from—he didn't know where.

Still the horrible sounds continued, and out of the tumult arose the dreaded voice:

"Mercy? Did you have mercy, Nicholas Poundexter? Remember your vow! The years are passing unheeded! Fulfill that solemn vow before it is too late! Remember! Your days are numbered!"

"I will!—I will!" shouted Poundexter. "I will!—I will!"

"It is well!" replied the voice. "The time is short. I leave you in peace. You have renewed the vow. Remember! Beware!"

The voice ceased, the light vanished, and the bedroom door closed with a bang that threatened to shatter it in pieces. Poundexter remained under the sofa a long time.

"I vow, I shall have to marry," thought he, "or the whole house will be down about my ears. I'd run away, but I never could escape these—these exhibitions. They are worth considerable in a scientific point of view, and I could clear a small fortune if I was allowed to make them public; but I don't think I could stand another one like this. I suppose the next would be worse yet. What I have ever done to be so persecuted is beyond my comprehension. There is only one way to get rid of this, and I'll marry. And I'll marry Clara Forman."

Poundexter now began to show stability. The very next evening he was at Forman's, and made good progress.

"I vow I will marry," said he, as he crossed the threshold of his own door. "I wonder if I shall be tormented to-night?"

He was not. The angry gods were evidently appeased, and everything went on quite smoothly for several days. He found so much real enjoyment on the "road to matrimony," that he forgot the "fiery paragraph," and the awful voice; but he remembered his vow.

If he had a heart—and who can doubt it?—Clara Forman's beauty had touched it. He became the most attentive of lovers.

And he pressed his suit with some success; for the wealth of Nicholas Poundexter, and such an agreeable accompaniment as Poundexter himself, were not to be thrown lightly aside. There was his town house—a model of taste and elegance; and his country seat was a most beautiful place. Then his stables were filled with enviable thoroughbreds, and who could drive them like Poundexter? And there was his five thousand a year. Who can wonder that Clara Forman was proud of his attentions, and looked eagerly forward to the time when she should be mistress of his elegant establishment?

Of course her heart had some influence. Indeed, it is but justice to her to say that she had regarded Poundexter with favor for a long time; but he was so very far out of reach! As she had not "vowed the grapes were sour," she was ready to grasp the coveted prize, and she was also determined to hold it securely.

Poundexter was very prompt. When he once decided to marry he gave his whole attention to it, just as he would have pushed the purchase of a favorite horse; and so speedily did he "close the bargain," that he took his acquaintances by surprise.

The appointment of the day followed as speedily, and Poundexter was deep in the details of furniture, and beds, and curtains, and the thousand and one things necessary to refurnish his elegant home.

He rather liked it. It gave him an exalted opinion of himself. There was an added dignity to his step, and to see him behind that "near chestnut" and his mate, one surely would know that he was about to marry.

And he congratulated himself on his escape from those terrible visitations that had made his life perfectly miserable. He had been unmolested since he had decided to marry—he heartily wished he had decided sooner—and he had no more fear of them, and no more need of them.

The day arrived at last; or, rather, the evening, for so it had been arranged. The carriage drove up to the door, and Poundexter hastened to enter it. He was somewhat excited—happy is a better term—and did not notice the muffled figure that held the door while he stepped into the carriage. But when this same figure followed him, and took a seat opposite, he began to wonder. He was so happy that he couldn't be cross, and he asked, very pleasantly:

"My dear sir, have you not made a mistake?"

The stranger made no reply, but instead came the much-dreaded, almost forgotten voice:

"Poundexter, this night you fulfill your vow! A guide is given you. Follow him, and all will be well. Disobey, and you forfeit your life. Remember, and beware!"

Without waiting to hear more, Poundexter sprang for the door; but the stranger grasped him, and forced him back upon the seat.

"The vow must be fulfilled!" said he; and at the same time Poundexter caught the gleam of sharp steel. He became very quiet, leaning back in his seat and wondering what would come next.

Carriages passed and repassed; the walks were thronged with people, and ever and anon he detected a policeman among them. But he dared not cry out. The stranger's hand was at his throat, and right above him gleamed the knife.

He saw the long line of carriages drawn up before the residence of Clara Forman; saw the brilliantly lighted mansion, and heard the merry laughter and the joyous music. But still the carriage drove on. Waiting! waiting! How long would Clara Forman wait for the expected one?

On, on, on! and at last they drew up before a plain dwelling, situated in the very outskirts of the city. Poundexter turned pale, and his whole frame was in a tremor, as he looked out at the house. Did he recognize it?

"There, Nicholas Poundexter!" said the strange guide, pointing at the one lighted window. "Go!"

Poundexter alighted, and tottered up the walk to the house. The stranger was close at his side, and when they reached the door he opened it, and commanded Poundexter to enter. Then he led him up the narrow stairs, and ushered him into a dimly-lighted chamber, following and closing the door.

Poundexter took in the whole scene at a glance. Lying on the bed was a young woman, with bridal robes covering her perfect form. Her beauty outshone even Clara Forman's, notwithstanding the weary hand of suffering that had been laid upon her. She, too, was waiting—had been waiting—*so long!* At the bedside sat father and mother, while at the window was the venerable clergyman and the good physician—all waiting.

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They rose when Poundexter and his strange guide entered. The young woman turned her full, dark eyes upon Poundexter with a wistful look, that he could not misunderstand. How many days and months had she waited for this hour! but not for it to come in such a manner. It gave her no happiness now; only relieved her anxiety.

Poundexter was perfectly passive in the hands of the strange guide. He stood with bowed head just where he had stopped when he entered the room, his mind busy with the past, and now and then a thought of Clara Forman and the gay company awaiting him. He was aroused by a sound like rushing water. Then the room became filled with that strange, dazzling light, following which was the mysterious voice:

"The bridegroom is ready, and the bride is waiting."

Then there was a short pause, during which no one spoke. Again the strange voice was heard:

"'I will make you my wife, Clara Lefever, and acknowledge you before all men. I solemnly promise it—within the year.' Has Nicholas Poundexter forgotten his own words? Does he remember this solemn vow? This night ends the year. This vow must be fulfilled. Let the ceremony be performed. See, the clock marks the time, and only ten short minutes are left. Peace be with you, Poundexter, and happiness attend your bride through all the years that are to come!"

The voice ceased, and the strange guide led Poundexter to the bedside, and placed the invalid's hand within his own. The white-haired clergyman proceeded with the duty assigned to him, and Nicholas Poundexter solemnly responded.

"What God hath joined together, let no man put asunder!"

The clock tolled the midnight hour, and the voice spoke for the last time:

"All is well! Adieu, adieu!"

For a brief time Poundexter was left alone with his bride. What was said by those two persons—the betrayed and the betrayer—may never be known; but when the parents again entered the room they knew, by the joyful light in the beautiful eyes, that their much-wronged, but now righted, daughter had at last found happiness. Well, she deserved it.

A SURPRISE IN THE HAYFIELD.

When, a few months later, Poundexter led his bride, in the full flush of health and happiness, to his luxuriant home, people wondered not that he had cast aside the smiles of Clara Forman for the love of this peerless beauty. They never knew the suffering she had endured for his sake, nor the hand that led him back to his allegiance.

Clara Forman felt the loss, but there was love enough in her heart to make her merciful toward the man who had ruined her happiness and so sorely wounded her pride. With a forgiving spirit, that deserved a better return, she said:

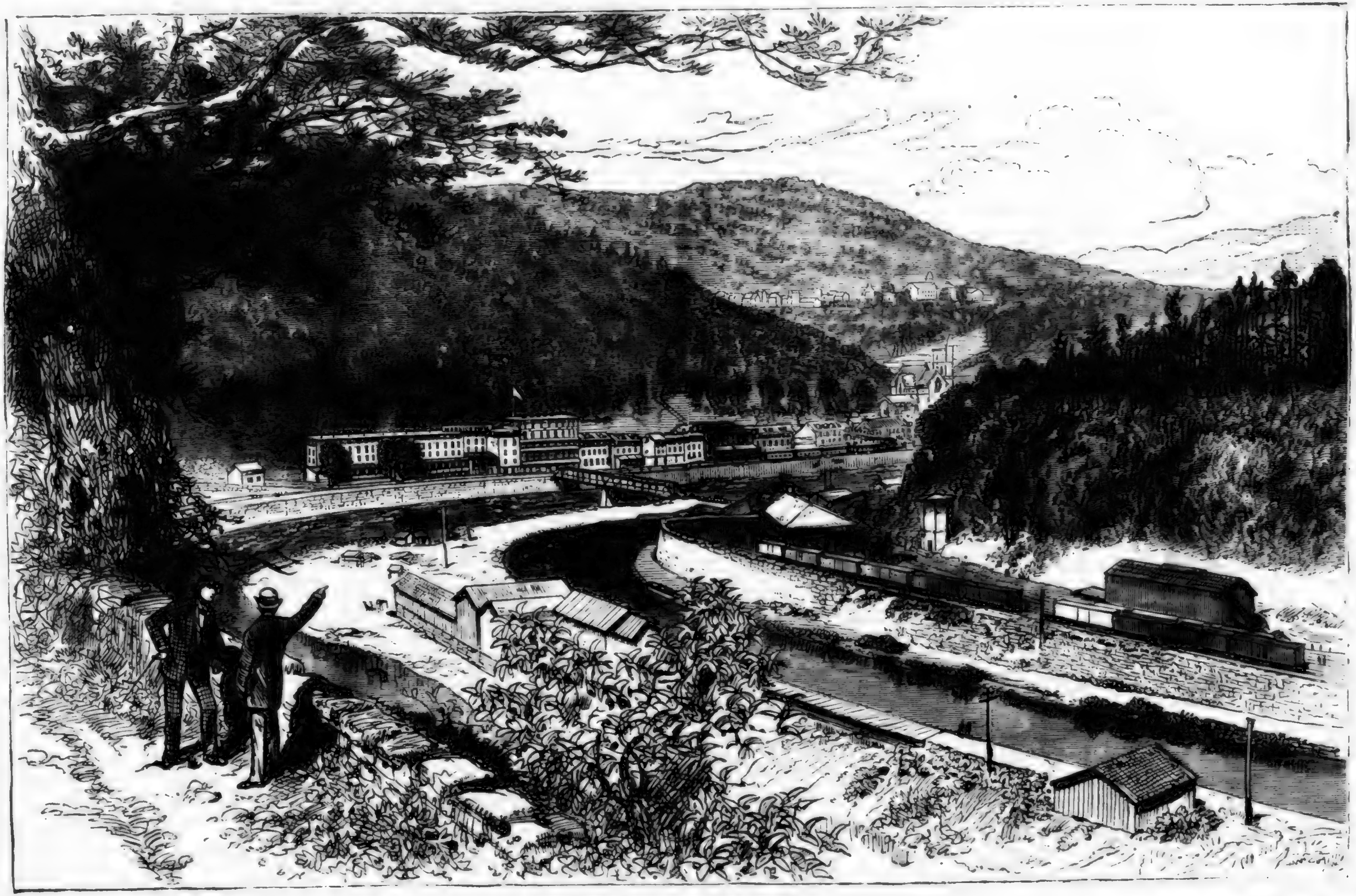
"I hope he will be happy."

May we not all hope that *her* sorrow may grow lighter as the years go by, and that she may at last find perfect happiness?

Thus was Poundexter married; thus was the vow fulfilled; and thus ended the mission of Signor ——, one of the most accomplished ventriloquists and necromancers of modern times.

THE LEHIGH VALLEY.

ONE of the most Switzerland-like parts of America, easy of access, too, from our great cities of New York and Philadelphia, is the Valley of the Lehigh. From Easton, if you take the Central Railroad, your route follows up the Valley of the Lehigh, hugging the left bank of the river all the way. Opposite, and similarly crowding and winding along the river, often in full view, is the Lehigh Valley Railroad, which, with the Central of New Jersey, divides the entire business of the great Lehigh coal-producing region. We pass through the active and bustling cities of Allentown and Catasauqua; the quaint town of Bethlehem, which still retains many of its Moravian characteristics; by the great iron foundries of Hokendauqua, where the descendants of the first manufacturer in America of iron from anthracite coal still conduct an enormous business; through a number of smaller towns, all interested in some form or other of iron manufacture; Packerton, with its extensive yards for the making-up of the long coal-trains which are almost constantly in sight; and a little more than four



THE LEHIGH VALLEY.—MAUCH CHUNK, PA.

hours from New York, are landed at Mauch Chunk, almost on the steps of the Mansion House.

Back of the house, at an angle of sixty degrees, rises Mauch Chunk Mountain, crowding its base under the very foundations of the hotel, and thrusting the limbs of its overhanging trees almost into the second and third-story windows. Mauch Chunk (Indian for Bear Mountain) ought to be a paradise for the operator in real estate —there's so very little of the article. In front of the Mansion House is a narrow street, the only one in the town; in front of the street, the tracks of the Central Railroad; in front of the tracks, the Lehigh River; in front of the river, the Lehigh Canal; in front of the canal, the Lehigh Valley Railroad; and in front of the railroad, the bold and precipitous side of Bear Mountain, with its base cut off sharply, in order to permit the existence of the railroad. All these are laid in together, "spoon-fashion," between Mauch Chunk and Bear Mountain; and what with two railroads, river and canal, small room is left for corner lots, avenues, boulevards and real-estate speculators.

The "Switch-back," the ostensible object of every excursion to Mauch Chunk, is an exceedingly simple and highly interesting affair. Built for the transportation of coal from the Summit Hill mines to the railways and canal at the Lehigh, it was superseded for that purpose five years since by the Nesquehoning tunnel, and is now used only for pleasure and excursion travel. Its tracks, of a guage one foot narrower than the ordinary railway, describe a gigantic ⋈ against the mountain side, and over them the cars are run with gravity as the sole motive power.

Arrived at the terminus of the road, at the foot of one of the arms of the ⋈, you see the Mount Pisgah Plane, 2,300 feet straight away up the face of the mountain before you, rising 660 feet to the opposite terminus of the other arm of the letter. The car, which holds perhaps thirty persons, is rapidly drawn up by a stationary engine, and once at the summit, the view is charming and picturesque. The valley, with its restless rushing river and equally restless trains, the sluggish canal and lazy boats, the towns of Mauch Chunk and East Mauch Chunk, are spread out as a map, while all around and near at hand on every side rise densely wooded mountains. The sides of Mount Pisgah are precipitous, and the view sweeps closely around its base. The whole field of vision, limited and sharply defined, gives one "a bird's-eye view" of this charming valley.

From the summit of Mount Pisgah the distinctive feature of the Switch-back Railroad is put in operation. A brakeman stations himself at the front of the car, and, without ado, delay, or effort of any kind, the car rolls swiftly down the declivity of six miles, diagonally, so to speak, along the side of the mountain, where the foot of another straight ascent—"plane" it is called here—is reached. This is Mount Jefferson, and we are hoisted to the top as at Mount Pisgah, by a stationary engine, and landed in the heart of the little mining village of Summit Hill. From this point we return to the foot of Mount Pisgah by gravity, the round trip of eighteen miles occupying, with stops for sight-seeing on the way, about an hour and a half. The grade of the gravity road is not heavy, ranging from forty to sixty feet to the mile, and the trip is attended by no danger whatever.

Two miles up the Lehigh from Mauch Chunk is the Glen Onoko, within two or three years opened to the public, and improved by the Lehigh Valley Railroad Company. To describe in detail Glen Onoko would be impossible. Of its general characteristics it may be said that it is one of the most beautiful and attractive spots that can be imagined; that it is a long and constantly varying succession of waterfalls, rocky cascades, moss-covered rocks, green, gleaming foliage, swaying boughs and brilliant flowers; it is a mile and a quarter long, ascending in that distance 900 feet, and it sustains all claim which its most ardent admirers make for it.

Onoko Falls, the principal in the glen, are seventy-five feet high, and almost perfect in their beauty, equaling the far-famed Minnehaha, with the accession of much more effective and sympathetic surroundings.

The water of the glen is from two large springs a short distance above its head, and the supply is constant and bountiful. Near the head of the glen is plainly visible the trail along which General Sullivan, a century ago, marched his little army in pursuit of the Indians, dragging over the almost impassable heights seven pieces of field artillery.

From the upper entrance of the glen, a walk of half a mile brings the visitor to "Packer's Point," where a lookout observatory has been erected, from which a view—similar in some respects, superior in others, to that from Mount Pisgah—is obtained. Sixty-five miles away, in a straight line to the southeast, Schooley's Mountain, in Jersey, is seen through the Lehigh Gap; over opposite is the broad Pocono, and near at hand, nestling by the bank of the Lehigh, are the two houses, on the old Wilkesbarre road from Mauch Chunk, which mark the spot where the first shipment of anthracite coal was made, bound for Philadelphia and a market.

THE SKELETON OF HOLAR CHURCH—AN ICELANDIC LEGEND.

ONCE, on a Winter evening, it happened that Jón Arason, Bishop of Hólar, wanted a book which he had left lying on the altar of the church, so he called his household folk together, and asked which of them would do him the favor of fetching the book to him. They all shuddered at the idea, and all drew back, except one maid-servant, who declared herself quite willing to go, and not in the least afraid.

Now, the bishop, having enemies—as who has not?—had made a tunnel from his own house, which was called the palace, underground to the church, with a view to being able, if need should ever be, to take sanctuary at a moment's notice, and unobserved.

Through this tunnel the maid went, having procured the keys of the church; but when she had taken the book from the altar she determined not to go back through the tunnel, which she had found dismal and ghostly, but, rather, round the other way. So she walked down the church with the keys to the outer door, and looking toward the benches where the women were wont to sit, she saw there a human skeleton with long yellow hair! Amazed at this, but in no way frightened, she went up to the figure and said:

"Who are you?"

Upon which the skeleton said:

"I am a woman, and have long been dead. But my mother cursed me so that I cannot corrupt and return to the dust whence I sprang. Now, therefore, my good girl, I entreat you to release me from this ban, if it lies in your power."

"But," answered the girl, "it does *not* lie in my power, as far as I now know. Tell me how I can help you."

Then the skeleton replied:

"You must ask my mother to forgive me my faults,

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and to annul her curse; for she may very likely do for the living what she refuses to do for the dead. It is a rare thing, indeed, for the living to ask favors of the dead."

"Where is your mother, then?" asked the maiden.

"Oh," said the other, "she is here, there and everywhere. Now, for example, she is yonder in the choir."

Then the maiden went through the door into the choir, and saw sitting there, on one of the benches, a wondrous ugly old woman in a red hat, to whom she addressed herself, asking her to be good enough to forgive her daughter and remove from her the curse. After pausing awhile, plainly unwilling, the old hag answered:

"Well, it is not often that you living people ask favors of me, so for once I will say to you Yea!"

Having thanked her for her goodness, the maiden went back toward the outer door, but when she came to the place where she had seen the skeleton, found there only a heap of dust. So she went on toward the door, and as she opened it she heard a voice from the inner part of the church, which cried after her:

"Look at my red eyes, how red they are!"

And without looking round she answered:

"Look at my black back, how black it is!"

As soon as she had shut the door behind her she found that the churchyard seemed to swarm with people, who were shouting and screaming direfully, and who made as if they would stop her. But she, summoning up courage, rushed through the middle of them, without looking either to the right or to the left, and reached the home-building in safety.

As she delivered the book to the bishop she said:

"So loud were the voices of the goblin band,
That five echoes for each were found
In the mountain-rock, though far they stand
From Holar burying-ground."

HOW SPECTACLES ARE MADE.

The white lens in use in the ordinary spectacle of commerce is made of the common window-pane glass rolled in sheets—sometimes it is made into balls. From these are cut pieces of about one and a quarter to one and a half inches in size; they are then taken into the grinding-room and each piece cemented separately upon what is called a lap, of a semicircular shape. These are made to fit into a corresponding curve or saucer, into which fine emery powder is introduced, and subjected to a swift rotary motion. The gradual curve in the lap gives to the glass as it is ground a corresponding shape, until the desired centre is reached. The lap is then taken and subjected to warmth, which melts the cement sufficiently to permit the glass being removed and turned upon the opposite side, when the same process is renewed. This being completed, the lenses are again detached from the lap and taken to another department, where they are shaped to fit the frames. This is accomplished by a machine of extreme delicacy. Each piece of glass is put separately upon a rest, when a diamond is brought to bear upon it, moving in the form of an oval, thus cutting the desired size; but the edges, of course, are rough and sharp, and must be beveled. For this purpose they are turned over to another set of hands, mostly girls, who have charge of the grindstones, which are about six inches in thickness. Each operator is provided with a gauge; the glass is taken between the forefinger and the thumb, and held sufficiently sidewise to produce the desired bevel; when this is attained it is again turned and the other side of the bevel completed. During this process it is constantly gauged in order to ascertain that the frame will close upon it without too much pressure, which would break the lens.

The next process to which the lens is subjected is that of "focusing," and requires extreme care. The person having this department to attend to is placed in a small room alone; across the entrance is hung a curtain, which is only drawn aside sufficiently to admit the required amount of light from a window several feet away, upon one of the top panes of which is placed a piece of heavy cardboard with a small hole cut in the centre representing the bull's-eye of a target. Through this the rays of light shine upon the lens in the hands of a workman, and are reflected through it to a dark background. The lens is then moved back and forth upon an inch measure until the proper focus is attained. Say, for instance, the extreme end of the measure is sixty-two inches—the lens is placed at that, but does not focus; it is gradually moved along, inch by inch, until, perhaps, it is brought to thirty-six inches. At this the proper height of centre or focus is attained, and it is then numbered thirty-six. The same operation is of course necessary with every lens. This accounts for the numbers which are upon spectacles or glasses of any kind when purchased.

HARK!

How weary have the minutes staid,
As at each my poor heart strayed,
That his loved steps have delayed
While I wait here!

I chid the rustling leaves above,
I hushed the cooing of the dove,
I waited for my coming love,
In anxious fear.

Hark! what is that, faint and far,
Reaches my ear? He lifts the bar;
He treads the path; shine out, O star!
My love is here!

The peril that around him hung,
The danger that struck dumb my tongue,
The viper foe that would have stung,
Now disappear.

A MURDER DISCOVERED BY TOUCHING THE DEAD BODY.

The following account of an extraordinary case of murder, in Hertfordshire, was found amongst the papers of that eminent lawyer, Sir John Maynard, one of the Lords Commissioners of the Great Seal of England:

"The case," relates Sir John, "or rather the history of a case, that happened in the County of Hertford, I thought good to report here, though it happened in the fourth year of King Charles I., that the memory of it may not be lost by the miscarriage of my papers or otherwise. I wrote the evidence which was given, which I and many others did hear, and I wrote it exactly according to what was deposed at the bar of the King's Bench, viz.:

"Johan Norkett, wife of Arthur Norkett, being murdered, the question was, how she came by her death? The coroner's inquest, on view of the body, and depositions of Mary Norkett, John Okerman, and Agnes his wife, inclined to find Johan Norkett *felo de se;* for they informed the coroner and jury that she was found dead in her bed, the knife sticking in the floor, and her throat

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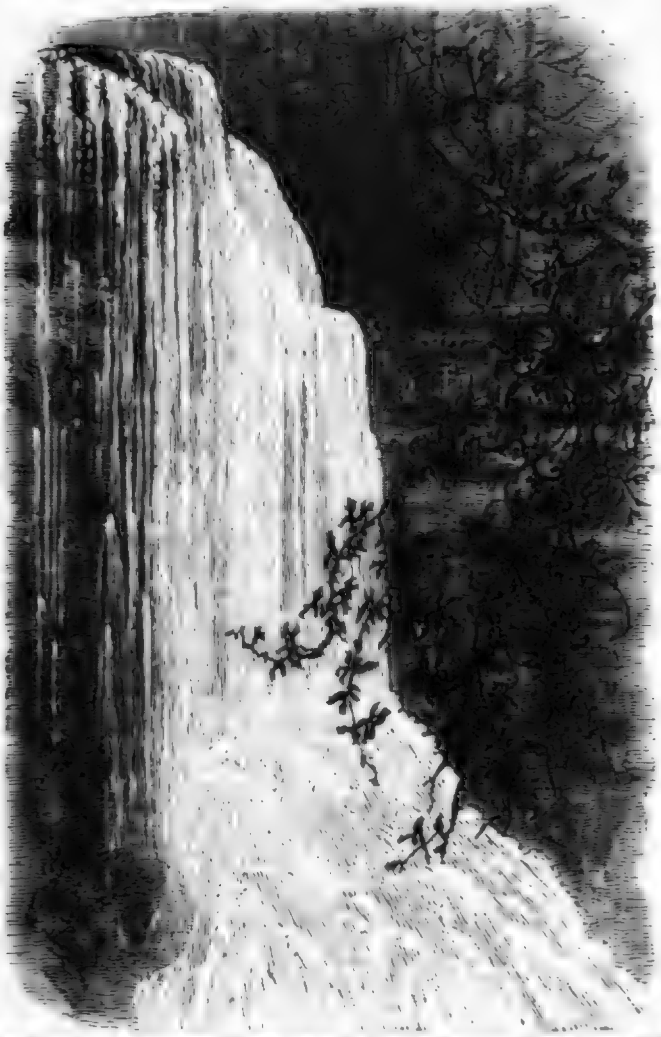
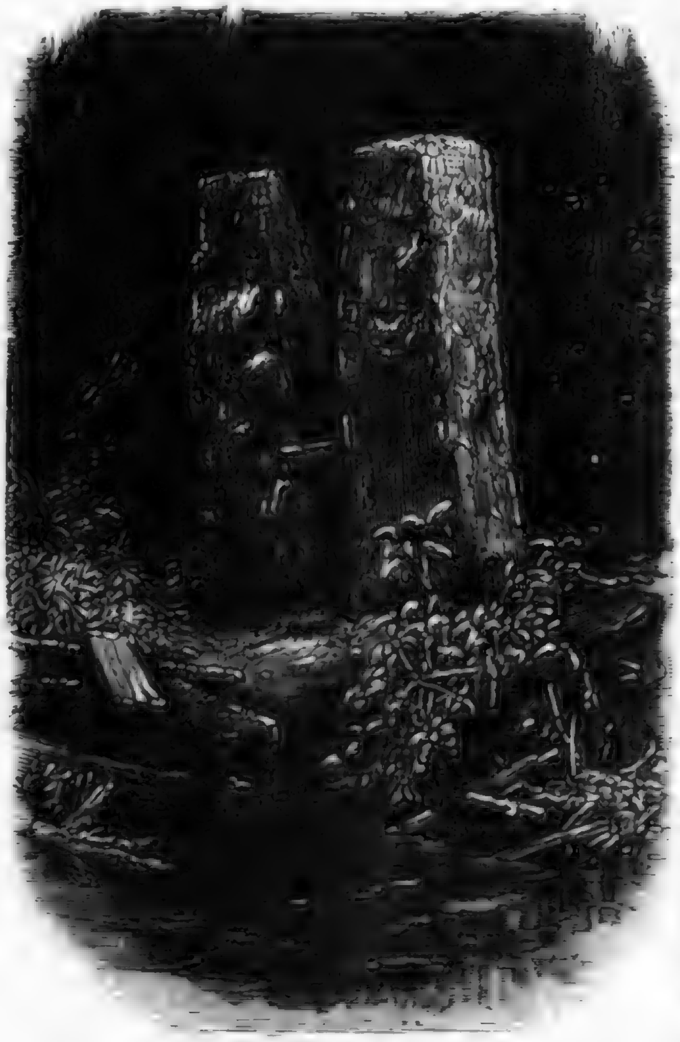
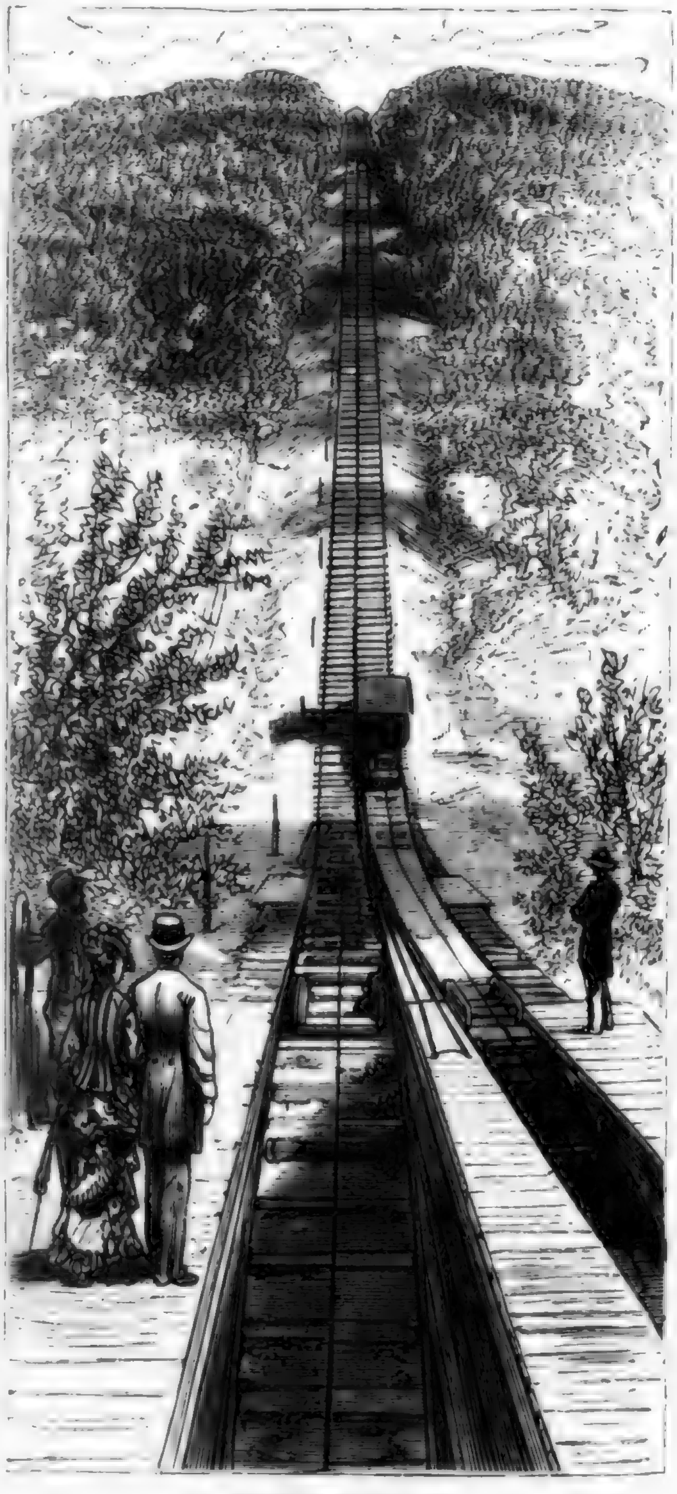


THE LEHIGH VALLEY.—ONOKO FALLS, GLEN ONOKO.—SEE PAGE 112.



PULPIT ROCKS, GLEN ONOKO.

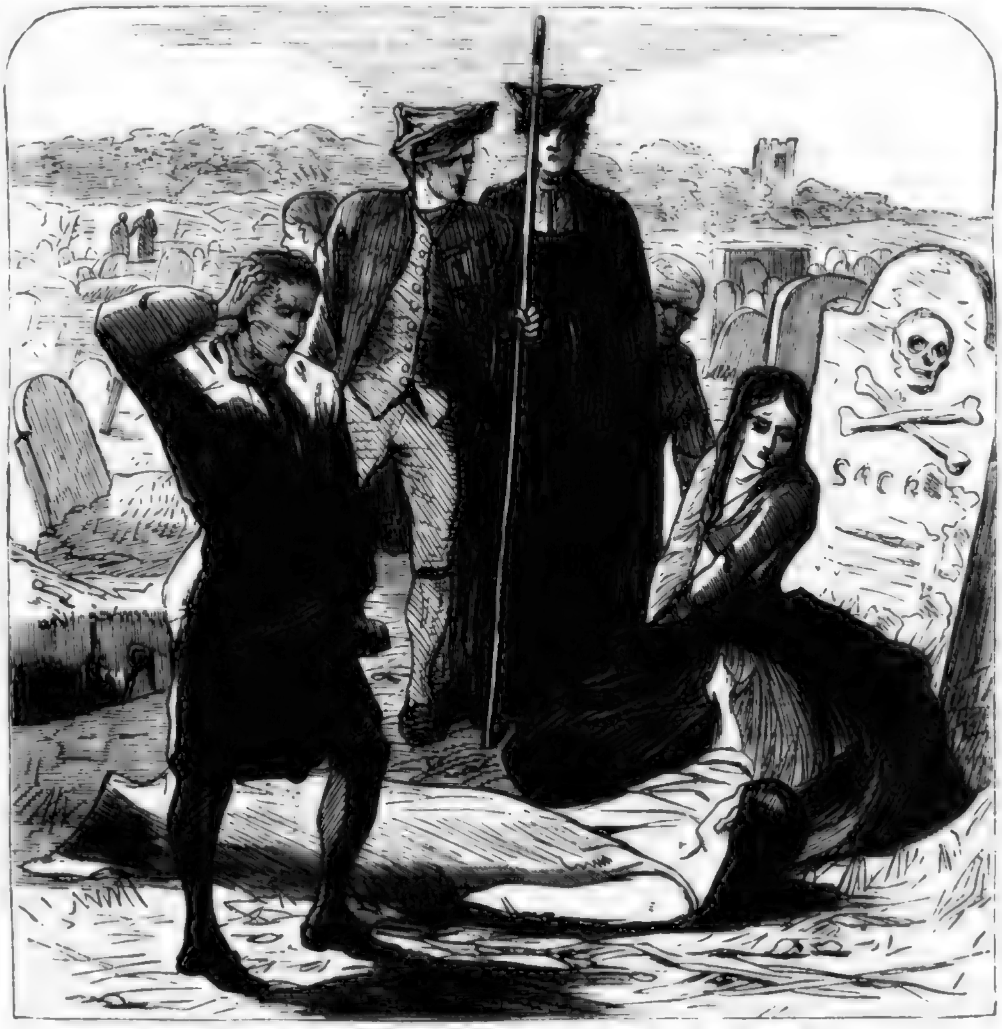
cut; that the night before she went to bed with her child, the plaintiff in this appeal (her husband being absent), and that no other person, after such time as she was gone to bed, came into her house, the examinants lying in the outer room, and they must needs have seen or known if any stranger had come in; whereupon the jury gave up to the coroner their verdict, that she was *felo de se*. But afterward, upon rumor among the neighborhood, and their observance of divers circumstances, which manifested that she did not, nor, according to these circumstances, could ever possibly murder herself, whereupon the jury, whose verdict was not yet drawn into form by the coroner, desired the coroner that the body, which was buried, might be taken out of the grave, which the coroner assented to; and thirty days after her death she was taken up in the presence of the jury and a great number of people, whereupon the jury changed their verdict. The persons being afterward tried at Hertford assizes, were acquitted,



MOUNT PISGAH PLANE.

but so much against the evidence that Judge Hervey left fall his opinion, that better an appeal (or action by the heir against the murderer for his life, a proceeding now abolished) were brought than so foul a murder escape unpunished; and in Easter term, 4th Charles I., they were tried on the appeal, which was brought by the young child against his father, grandmother, and aunt, and her husband, Okerman; and because the evidence was so strange, I took exact and particular notice, and it was as follows, viz.:

"After the matters above related, an ancient and grave person, minister to the parish where the murder was committed (being sworn to give evidence according to custom), deposed, 'That the body being taken out of the grave thirty days after the party's death, and lying on the grass, and the four defendants present, they were required each of them to touch the dead body. Okerman's wife fell upon her knees, and prayed God to show tokens of her innocence, or to some such purpose—her very words I have forgot. The appellees did touch the dead body, whereupon the brow of the dead, which was before a livid and carrion color (that was the verbal expression *in terminis* of the witness), began to have a dew or gentle sweat arise upon it, which increased by degrees till the sweat ran down in drops upon the face, the brow turned and changed to a lively and fresh color, and the dead opened one of her eyes and shut it again, and this opening the eye was done three several times. She likewise thrust out the ring or marriage finger three several times, and pulled it in again, and the finger dropped blood on the grass.'



A MURDER DISCOVERED BY TOUCHING THE DEAD BODY.—SEE PAGE 115.

"Sir Nicholas Hyde, Chief Magistrate, seemed to doubt the evidence, and asked the witness:

"'Who saw this besides you?'

"*Witness:* 'I cannot swear what others saw; but, my lord,' said he, 'I believe the whole company saw it; and if it had been thought a doubt, proof would have been made of it, and many would have attested with me.'

"Then the witness, observing some admiration in the auditors, spake further:

"'My lord, I am minister of the parish, and have known all of the parties, but never have had any occasion of displeasure against any of them, nor had to do with them, nor they with me. But as I was minister, the thing was wonderful to me. I have no interest in the matter, but as called upon to testify the truth, and that I have done.'

"This witness was a reverend person; as I guessed, was about seventy years of age. His testimony was delivered gravely and temperately, but to the great admiration of the auditory; whereupon, applying himself to the chief-justice, he said:

"'My lord, my brother here present is minister of the parish adjacent, and, I am assured, saw all done that I have affirmed.'

"Therefore, that person was sworn to give evidence, and deposed to in every point, viz.: the sweating of the brow, changing of its color, opening of the eye, and the thrice motion of the finger, and drawing it in again—only the first witness added that he himself dipped his finger in the blood which came from the dead body, to examine it, and he swore he believed it was blood.

"I conferred afterward with Sir Edward Powell, barrister-at-law, and others, who all concurred in the observation; and for myself, if I were upon oath, I can depose that these depositions, especially the first witness, are reported truly.

"The other evidence was given against the prisoners,—viz.: the grandmother of the plaintiff, and against Okerman and his wife—that they confessed they lay in the next room to the dead person that night, and that none came into the house till they found her dead the next morning. Therefore, if she did not murder herself, they must be the murderers. To that end further proof was made:

"*Firstly.*—That she lay in a composed manner in bed, the bed-clothes nothing at all disturbed, and her child by her in bed.

"*Secondly.*—Her throat cut from ear to ear, and her neck broken; and if she first cut her throat, she could not break her neck in the bed, nor *contra.*

"*Thirdly.*—There was no blood in the bed, saving there was a tincture of blood on the bolster, where her head lay, but no substance of blood at all.

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"*Fourthly.*—From the bed's head there was a stream of blood on the floor, which ran along till it ponded in the bendings on the floor to a very great quantity; and there was also another stream of blood at the bed's foot, which ponded also on the floor to a very great quantity; but no continuance or communication of either of these two places from one to the other, neither upon the bed—so that she bled in two places severally. And it was deposed, turning up the mats of the bed, there were clots of congealed blood in the straw of the mats underneath.

"*Fifthly.*—The bloody knife was found in the morning sticking in the floor, a good distance from the bed, but the point of the knife, as it stuck, was to the bed, and the haft from the bed.

"*Sixthly.*—There was a print of a thumb and forefinger of a left hand.

"Sir Nicholas Hyde, chief-justice, said to the witness:

"'How can you know the print of a left hand from the print of a right hand in such a case?'

"*Witness:* 'It is hard to describe; but if it pleases that honorable judge to put his left hand upon your left hand, you cannot possibly put your right hand in the same posture.'

"Which being done, and appearing so, the defendants had time to make their defense, but gave no evidence to any purpose. The jury, departing from the bar, and returning, acquitted Okerman, and found the other three guilty, who being severally demanded what they could say why judgment should not be pronounced, said no more than, 'I did not do it! I did not do it!'

"Judgment was given, and the grandmother and the husband executed, but the aunt had the privilege to be spared execution, being with child.

"I inquired if they confessed anything at their execution, but they did not, as I am told."

BUTTER AND CHEESE OF THE ANCIENTS.

From the fact that ancient writers of the Hebrew and Greek schools do not mention butter or cream, some have concluded that neither was known nor used, up to nearly the close of the first century of the Christian era; but this must be a mistake, for no doubt one of the oils mentioned in the Old Testament was of a butyraceous description. The milk of herds and of goats is spoken of, consequently there must have been cream, and butter also, produced by the conveyance of milk in skins on camelback, as it is frequently carried in what is called the Holy Land to-day.

The climate, in patriarchal times, as at present, would not allow butter to remain long in a solid state; and hence its mention as oil. This is, however, speculative, though more than probable.

Pliny speaks of "cow-cheese," which he calls butyrum; and the nomad Arabs made what they called "kymac," which is a thickened preparation of cream, almost like butter. It is made by shaking cream of goats' milk in a calabash. The native East Indians make butter from buffaloes' milk, which they call "ghee," which is simply butter of a thick, oily consistency.

Homer and Virgil both mention cheese, the former that could be cut by a knife—Hercamede being described in the Iliad as having shred and scraped goats' cheese into a posset he prepared for the wounded Machaon. Virgil leaves cheese with no greater consistency than curd, which the Scythians used to mix with mare's blood and feast upon.

Long before the Christian era, the buttery extract from milk was used by the barbarous nations and by the Romans as an ointment, with which they anointed children when teething, and applied to their skins to defend them from the sun. This was butyrum, ghee, or melted butter; and, if it looked then no more tempting than when presented forty years ago, under an Arab tent at the second cataract on the Nile, it must have been then, as now, a very repulsive appearing article of food, with a most offensive smell of rancidity.

THE EYE AND ITS USE.

By William Ackroyd, F. I. C.

It is easy to work with an instrument without knowing anything at all about its construction. Thousands of tourists yearly point their "glasses" to mountain and mere without having the least idea in what manner these wonderful instruments bring that which is afar off comparatively near to them; and how many millions are there who use their eyes every waking hour of their lives without knowing about the build of these wonderful organs! Yet, if one sets about it properly, it is very easy to learn quite enough to understand how the eye is built up, how its parts work harmoniously together, and how we have acquired our ideas of form, size, distance, etc.

If desirous of knowing all about the telescope, our first work would be to take it to pieces, and then we should try and ascertain, as well as we could, the use of each part, arriving finally at a conception of the working of the whole instrument. We must proceed similarly in the case of the eye. Let us, then, dismember an eye, and by a series of intelligent observations, experiments and comparisons we may arrive at all we at present want to know—the structure and use of it. Fortunately for our purpose, the eye of a sheep or cow will do quite well. If you send to the butcher for two eyes he will probably, as in my case, send you half-a-dozen. With these make the following investigation:

Take one and cut off the muscle which has been left adhering to the side. Now note that the eyeball is nearly spherical, and has a white cord projecting from the back. This cord proceeds into the interior of the eye, and before it was severed connected the eye with the brain. Without cutting up the eye, we can ascertain little more now than we do by an inspection of our own eyes in the looking-glass. We observe a transparent, circular front, which bulges out slightly; this is the cornea, and it merges into the "white of the eye" or *sclerotic coat*, which seems to form the rest of the eyeball. Under the transparent cornea one sees a colored ring, the iris, and the opening in the middle of this is termed the pupil. We may turn now to make a cursory examination of its interior.

With a pretty sharp razor cautiously make a cross incision into the cornea of the cow's eye. As soon as the thick cornea has been cut through a watery-looking fluid issues, which is termed the *aqueous humor.* When the incision has been made large enough gently press the eyeball, and there will be squeezed out a most important organ, the *crystalline lens*, truly crystalline, for it is *ice-like* in its transparency and purity. It is not always thus, for on the approach of old age it becomes tinged with yellow, and has then a peculiar effect on the color sense, not of much consequence save in the case of an artist. To one troubled with this defect, the *strong* blues presented by nature in daylight appear bluer than they are, and the *weak* blues of his pigments much weaker than they are. But in following his art the painter has to copy nature's bright blues, with the weak blues he has before him in

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his pigments, and consequently puts too much of the latter on to his canvas in his endeavor to represent nature faithfully. This was Mulready's condition in his old days, and Leibreich points out that his later pictures are too cold, and only look of a natural tint when we observe them through yellow glass.

After observing well the form of the lens, how that it is more convex on one side than on the other, put it aside for future experimental use. One of the incisions that have been made in the cornea may now be enlarged, so that the sclerotic coat is cut through and the eyeball nearly bisected. The remainder of the eyeball will be found to contain a perfectly colorless and jelly-like substance, the *vitreous humor*. Through this transparent humor the color of the internal coating of the eye is plainly visible, of a satiny, and in some parts a perfectly violet, tint. The wall or spherical shell which surrounds the vitreous humor consists of three layers—the inner colored one, termed the retina, the outer sclerotic coat, and between these two the choroid coat, which is lined with pigment on the side which it presents to the retina. The more minute structure of some of these we must inquire into further on; and now, before the mangled eye is pitched away, note the spot on the retina where the white cord or optic nerve enters, by pushing a pin through the nerve into the interior. The pin-point will be found to come out a little to one side of the central portion of the retina.

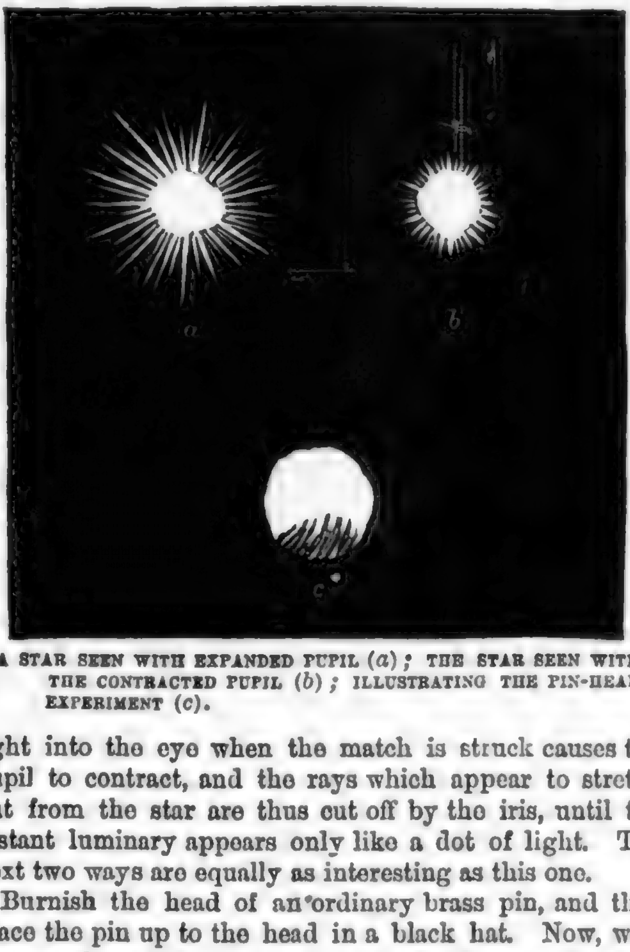
Our preliminary work has necessarily been of a rough nature; we have been settling broad landmarks, and the reader who may be inclined to go in for a more minute survey will now use the microscope and dissecting apparatus, and have recourse to the instructions furnished by special works of too technical a nature to be detailed in these pages. We have done well if the position and shape of the principal parts are understood, so that we can form a picture in the mind's eye of the inside as well as the outside of the visual organ. To aid us in this, let us turn to a finished diagram, so that we may understand one or two points concerning which we are at present a little hazy—as, *e.g.*, the exact position and mode of suspension of the lens, how the iris is attached, etc.

On reference to cut on p. 125 it will be seen that the lens is placed between the vitreous humor and the aqueous humor, and is kept in its place by a membranous frame, which extends from the edges of the lens to what are termed the ciliary processes of the choroid coat.

The outer edges of the iris are firmly connected with the shell at the junction of the cornea and sclerotic coat, and it is applied pretty closely to the front face of the lens. By the contraction of certain circular muscles, with which it is provided, it can lessen the area of the pupil quickly, just as in an old fashioned purse the drawing to of the strings closes the mouth. It has likewise certain radiating fibres, and the contraction of these enlarges the pupil, as, again, we might open the mouth of the purse by pulling at the sides of the bag.

The movements of the iris or colored curtain of the eye are of extreme interest, showing as they do how very sensitive the eye is to light. There are several ways of watching its movements, one being the familiar looking-glass method. Shut one eye and look into a mirror with the other at the iris. It will be found that upon opening the closed eye the iris which is being gazed at will expand very markedly, or, what amounts to the same thing, there will be a marked contraction of the pupil. Other methods the writer has described in a paper read before the Royal Society of Edinburgh, and as they require no complicated apparatus, we may give them here.

The surface of the cornea is moistened with the fluid which forms tears, and as every time one winks this film of liquid is disturbed, it follows, from what we know of the influence of rough surfaces on light, that there must be a slight alteration in direction of some of the rays which enter the eye. Regard a distant gas-lamp with one eye closed—beams seem to proceed from the flame like golden bars. These are due to a large extent to the bending influence of this surface-fluid. Whilst looking at the light with one eye, it will be found that there is an alteration in the disposition of the bars at every wink—that is, at every disturbance of this tear-fluid. Now gaze steadily at one of the brightest of the stars, or at a gas-lamp some distance away, and strike a match in front of the face while looking at the star or lamp. Immediately the match is lighted, the bars of light, which seem to project from the star on every hand, retreat into it like the horns of a snail that have just come into rude contact with some unwelcome object. The influx of more light into the eye when the match is struck causes the pupil to contract, and the rays which appear to stretch out from the star are thus cut off by the iris, until the distant luminary appears only like a dot of light. The next two ways are equally as interesting as this one.



A STAR SEEN WITH EXPANDED PUPIL (*a*); THE STAR SEEN WITH THE CONTRACTED PUPIL (*b*); ILLUSTRATING THE PIN-HEAD EXPERIMENT (*c*).

Burnish the head of an ordinary brass pin, and then place the pin up to the head in a black hat. Now, with one eye shut, and your back to the light, bring the pin-head near to the other eye, so that light may be reflected into it from the polished convex surface. One sees a circular luminous field, with projecting hairs at the bottom, which belong to the top eyelid (*c*). Globules of the tear-fluid also appear at each wink. Now, while looking at this circular luminous field, bring up the other hand and intercept the light which is falling into the eye for a moment. When the hand is drawn away, mark the distinct alteration in area of field which is produced—the field contracts most markedly.

For the remaining method we only require a piece of tin-foil in which a minute hole has been pricked with a pin. Upon closing one eye as before, and looking with the other through this hole, placed about half an inch away, any alteration in size of the iris is at once discerned by the alteration in area of the circular field of view.

Substantially the same effects may be observed under very different circumstances. Lying idly on one's back on the grass in the midday sun, with the eyes screened

HARK!—SEE POEM ON PAGE 115.

by the border of a straw hat, one sees a great number of round holes against the bright sky, and they simultaneously and capriciously alter in size.

Were we not acquainted with the foregoing facts, we should little think of referring these alterations to the movements of the iris.

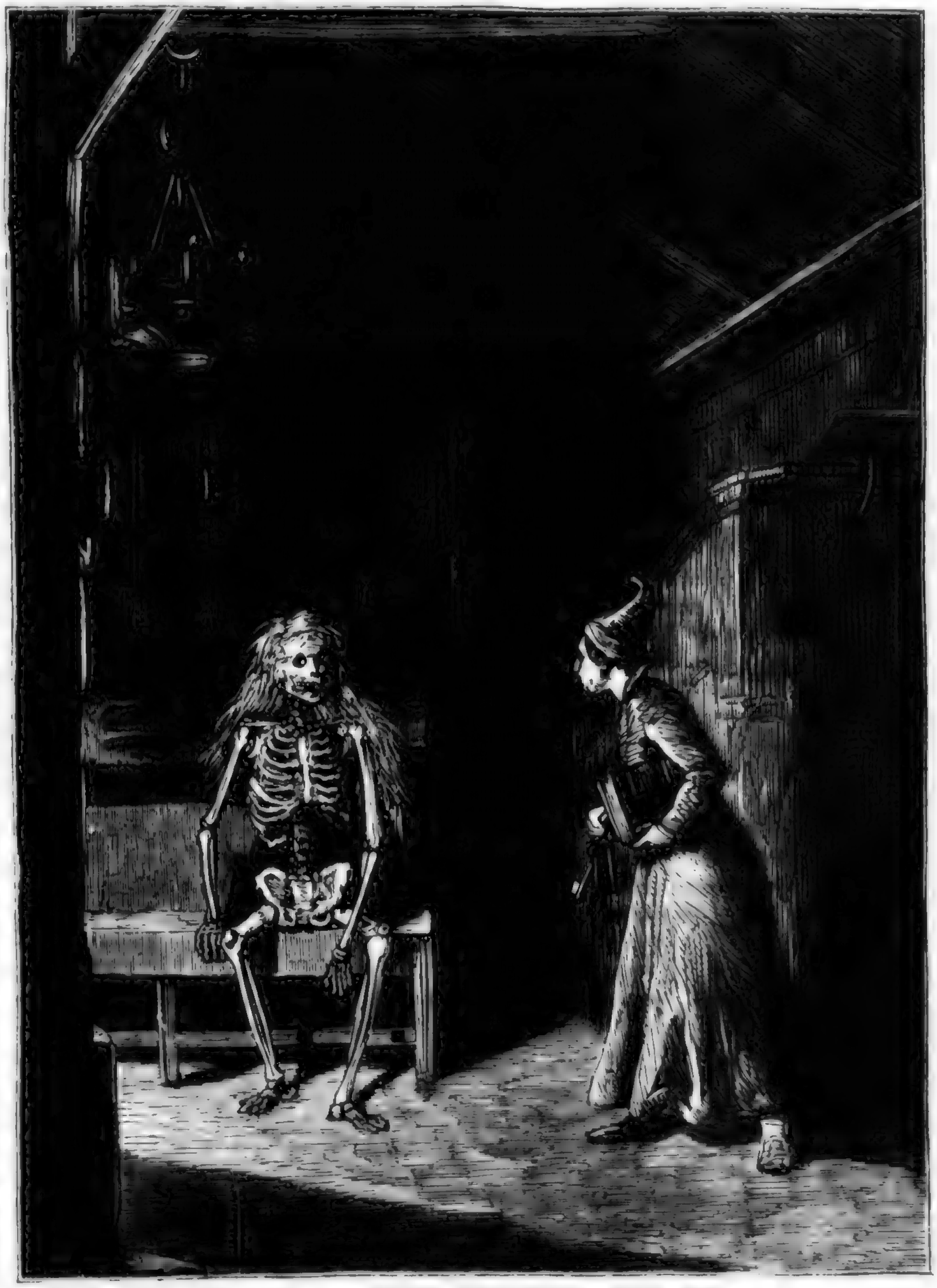
Again, if with the back to the light a polished walking-stick be held close to one side of the face, like a fencer guarding that region, the portion of it nearest to the eye presents a bar of light, which varies in width according as the pupil is expanded or contracted. The ring on one's finger will answer admirably for the pin in the hat experiment, and the reader may often have seen the round circle of light reflected from its surface when in meditative mood he has had his ring-finger near to his eye; he may, moreover, have seen it expand and contract, and have been quite at a loss to account for the phenomenon.

These and other facts all prove how very sensitive the eye is to variations in amount of light entering it, a sensitiveness which has been admiringly pondered over by both poet and philosopher. Thomas Moore and Oliver Wendell Holmes each compare the pupil of the eye to bigotry, which the more light you pour upon it the more it contracts; and no doubt some poet of the future will liken the iris, in its beauty, to liberal-mindedness, which the more you illuminate it the more it expands.

We have now taken our optical instrument to pieces, and know the positions of its most prominent parts—cornea, aqueous humor, crystalline lens, vitreous humor and retina. By a very homely device we may illustrate the use of the more important of these. The apparatus necessary consists of a plain glass flask filled with water, a candle, and two pieces of white cardboard, one of which must have a small round hole punched in it, about the size of a three-cent-piece. Place the flask so that the light of the candle may fall full upon it, and take the unperforated piece of cardboard and fix it upright on the other side of the flask, at such a distance that an image of the candle-flame is projected on to it. The image will appear somewhat blurred, owing to what is known as spherical aberration, or the inability of a lens with spherical surfaces to bring all the rays which fall upon it to the same focus. Now place the perforated cardboard between the light and the flask, and it will be found that the image is very much improved, more distinct and perfect than before. With the completed arrangement we have the apparatus placed as on p. 122, in this order: light, perforated cardboard, water-flask and cardboard screen; and the use of three very important portions of the eye is illustrated, the screen (IV.) representing the retina, the flask (III.) the crystalline lens, and the perforated cardboard (II.) standing for the iris. One of the uses of the iris, then, is to correct any tendency the crystalline lens may have to form a blurred image; and the use of the lens is to project a pretty picture of external objects on to the retina, whilst the latter transmits its impressions through the optic nerve to the brain.

That the action of the crystalline lens is precisely the same as that of our water-flask may be easily shown. Stick a pin into the edge of the lens that has been kept to experiment with, and now bring the candle on one side of it and a paper screen on the other. A blurred image appears on the screen, and it is *inverted*. Its distinctness is much improved by having here, as in our former experiment, a perforated piece of cardboard or paper to represent the iris.

The iris is said to have another use, which will be well understood after considering the behavior of a bundle of rays passing through a double convex lens. Since the lens is thickest in the middle and thinnest at the margin, we may look at it as a combination of peculiar glass prisms. Suppose a double convex lens were cut in two, its section would be of the shape shown at *a* (page 122), which is not unlike a section of two prisms base to base (*b*), and it behaves toward white light like two such prisms. A prism, as the reader is aware, breaks up white light into its "parent colors," red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet, and in the course of this breaking up violet light is most bent, and red least so. If, therefore, two thin pencils of white light, *a* and *b* (page 122), be sent into two prisms, placed base to base, it will be readily seen that the violet rays come together at *f* much sooner than the red rays at *f'*, and when a double convex lens is employed to bring together an infinite number of rays of light, it behaves like two prisms placed base to base. In the centre of the field the overlapping of the spectra gives us a white area, but the borders, where no such overlapping can take place, are colored; the border of the section at s, before any of the rays have been brought to a focus, is of an orange to red tint, and the section of s', after all the rays have been brought to a focus, is of a bluish tinge. This may be seen with an ordinary magnifying glass in the case of the sun's rays. Before the sun's image is well formed the border of the circle of light is of an orange tint; after the focus is past the disk of light is fringed with blue. Double convex lenses all behave in this way, a peculiarity which is termed *chromatic aberration.* If this fringe were cut off by means of a ring-like screen, it is evident that inconvenience arising from this aberration would be overcome. Ring-like screens of this kind are, therefore, employed inside telescopes for this purpose; and many eminent men maintain that in the iris we are supplied with a ring-like screen which neutralizes any tendency the crystalline lens may have to exhibit this defect.



THE SKELETON OF HOLAR CHURCH—AN ICELANDIC LEGEND.—SEE PAGE 114.

In darkness we see nothing, nor can we see anything in daylight if the eyes be closed. Immediately, however, the eyes are opened, we become conscious of the existence of external objects; their images are cast upon the retina, and in some wonderful manner the facts are flashed along the optic nerve to the brain. This action of light upon the retinal membrane is one of the most marvelous that we are acquainted with; not that there is a lack of surprising facts concerning the power of a beam of light, for we know that it is an agent that has a peculiar and potent influence in the three kingdoms of nature. The work done by it in the green leaves of trees must be something enormous, and had we the proper data, it would be an interesting problem to ascertain how many millions of tons of wood are yearly produced by its chemical action on the carbonic acid floating in the air. Its influence on vital phenomena is somewhat surprising, it being a well-known fact that the healthiest portions of a hospital are those wards which are best lighted. The prolonged absence of light would be a very serious matter, for an eternal night on the face of the earth would probably lead first to death and disease, and finally to a sightless animal creation. Note the effects of an Arctic night in Smith's Sound, as described by Dr. Kane:

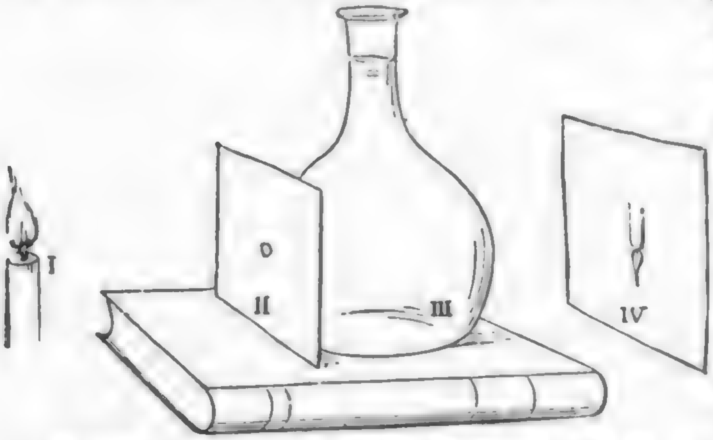
"*Dec. 15th, Thursday.*—We have lost the last vestige of our mid-day twilight. We cannot see print, and

XUM

scarcely paper; the fingers cannot be counted a foot from the eyes.

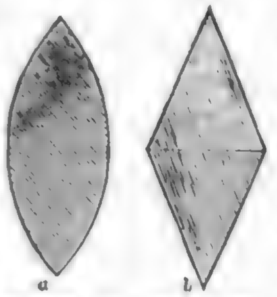
"The first traces of returning light were observed at noon on the 21st January, when the southern horizon had for a short time a distinct orange tint. . . . . We had been nearing the sunshine for thirty-two days, and had just reached that degree of mitigated darkness which made the extreme midnight of Sir Edward Parry in latitude 74° 47′. Even as late as the 31st, two very sensitive daguerreotype plates, treated with iodine and bromine, failed to indicate any solar influence when exposed to the southern horizon at noon; the camera being used in-doors to escape the effects of cold. The influence of this long, intense darkness was most depressing. Even our dogs, although the greater part of them were natives of the Arctic Circle, were unable to withstand it. Most of them died from an anomalous form of disease, to which I am satisfied the absence of light contributed as much as the extreme cold. I give a little extract from my journal of January 20.

"'This morning at five o'clock—for I am so afflicted with the insomnium of this eternal night that I rise at any time between midnight and noon—I went upon deck. It was absolutely dark, the cold not permitting a swinging lamp. There was not a glimmer came to me through the ice-crusted window-panes of the cabin. While I was feeling my way, half puzzled as to the best method of steering clear of whatever might be before me, two of my Newfoundland dogs put their cold noses against my hand, and instantly commenced the most exuberant antics of satisfaction. It then occurred to me how very dreary and forlorn must these poor animals be, at atmospheres + 10° in-doors, and — 50° without, living in darkness, howling at an accidental light as if it reminded them of the moon, and with nothing either of instinct or sensation to tell them of the passing hours, or to explain the long-lost daylight. They shall see the lantern more frequently.'"



EXPERIMENT TO ILLUSTRATE THE USE OF CERTAIN PARTS OF THE EYE.

Now, suppose an animal, untold ages ago, had been placed in darkness, kept there, and all its descendants after it—what would have happened? An organ that is never used decreases in size, and in the course of ages may disappear. It is highly probable, therefore, that after a few generations, the eyes of these confined animals would be diminished in size and sensitiveness, and that finally they would become stone-blind. It is thought by many scientific men that the blind fishes and insects which inhabit the Mammoth Caves of Kentucky have had some such history, and are the descendants of originals still represented by perfect forms outside. From the foregoing facts it follows that the absence of light is injurious, and its presence beneficial, to animated nature. Nor is its influence on inorganic matter of less importance. We have seen that it materially influences the electrical conductivity of the element selenium, and as a quality is seldom isolated, but possessed by a host of other bodies to a more or less degree, light has probably this action on other substances. When absorbed it may be turned into heat, or employed in effecting chemical changes, as in the photographer's iodized plate. Books, sometimes, which have lain for years and years side by side, with only the titular portion of the backs exposed to the sun's rays, exhibit a marked difference in the color of their covers, the backs being decidedly paler than the sides.

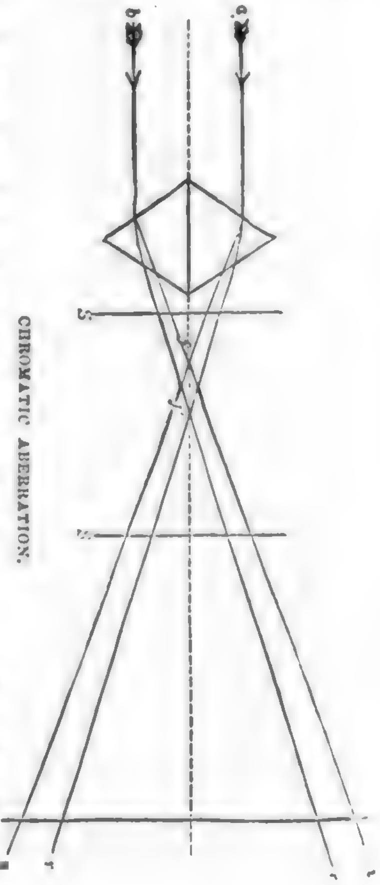


SECTION OF DOUBLE CONVEX LENS (*a*); SECTION OF TWO PRISMS PLACED BASE TO BASE (*b*).

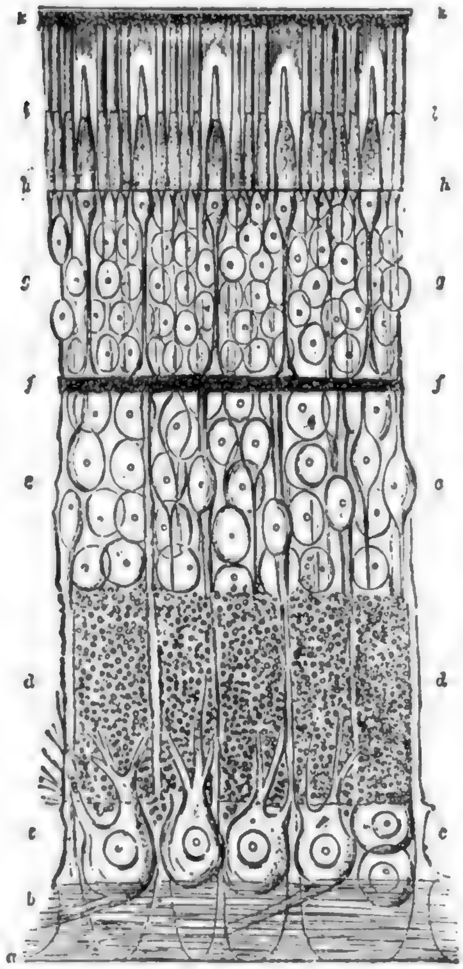
The bird-stuffer, aware of this action of light, takes good care to paint the plumage of his birds with more stable colors; and the careful curator, long tormented with the destructive action of light on the gaudy colors of his butterflies, now endeavors with tinted glass to sift the sun's rays of what he has found to be their most destructive parts.

This bleaching action is exhibited in a remarkable degree in the case of the retina. After Prof. Fr. Boll announced the discovery that the outer layer of the retina —*i.e.*, the layer furthest from the vitreous humor—is in the living condition not colorless, but of a purple-red color, and that the color is being continually destroyed by the light which enters the eye, this subject became of the utmost importance, and ere long, Dr. W. Kühne, Professor of Physiology in the University of Heidelberg, ascertained that this coloring matter, termed the *visual purple*, may be bleached by light *after death*—an important discovery, inasmuch as many experiments could now be made on removed retinæ, which before would have seemed useless or impossible.

To show the influence of solar light, Kühne took ten uniformly purple retinæ of frogs (*Rana temporaria*), and spread them out in a row touching each other; he placed the retinæ in a spectrum of the sun's light obtained by passing a bundle of rays through a flint-glass prism, so that some were exposed to ultra-red and red rays, others to violet and ultra-violet rays, and the remainder to the light of the rest of the spectrum. It would appear that where there was the greatest absorption of light, the bleaching of the exposed retinæ was soonest effected.


CHROMATIC ABERRATION.

After his experiments, Kühne was able to affirm that light of one color bleaches and decolorizes the coloring matter of the retina, as white light does, only very much more slowly; that of all one-colored lights the following act with decreasing rapidity: greenish-yellow yellowish-green, green, bluish-green, greenish-blue, cyanogen-blue, indigo-blue, violet, later pure yellow and orange, and still later ultra-violet and red; that the extreme red and ultra-violet rays are not entirely without action, but that the commencement of the ultra-violet is more active than the commencement of the visible red. He points out, as a most significant fact, that precisely those rays which most affect our eyes, and appear to be the most intense—namely, the greenish-yellow—are those by which the coloring matter of the retina itself is the most changed. Seeing then that the retina is the eye-screen, and that it is materially influenced by the action of light, it now behooves us, because of its importance, to inquire more particularly into its structure, and the uses of its various parts.



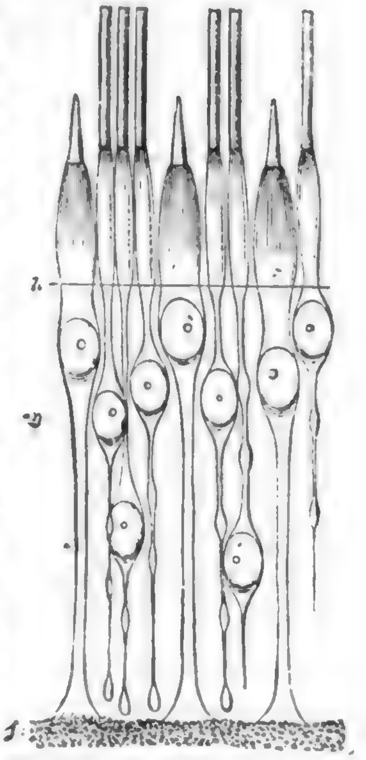
SECTION OF THE HUMAN RETINA.

a) Surface of the Retina in contact with the Vitreous Humor; (b) Expansion of the Fibres of the Optic Nerve; (c) Ganglionic Corpuscles; (d) Molecular Layer and Nervous Fibres; (e) Inner Granules and Nuclei; (f) Intergranular Layer, and interwoven Nervous Fibres bearing the Inner Granules; (g) Granules of the Outer Layer; (h) Outer Limiting Surface where the Rods and Cones start, and Connective Tissue ceases; (i) Rods and Cones; (k) Limiting Surface in contact with the Pigment of the Choroid Coat.

The retina is a perfectly transparent membrane, varying in thickness from an eightieth to a little less than a hundred and sixtieth of an inch, and lines the interior of the wall of the eye-ball, as we have seen. A thin vertical section of it at any spot except the exact centre (called the yellow spot) and the entrance of the optic nerve, when viewed under the microscope, presents us with the structures represented. From *b* to *h* the nervous element is held together by what is termed connective tissue, and beyond *h* the remainder of the retina consists of peculiarly shaped nerve filaments, some like staves, and called *rods*, and others of a sugar-loaf form, termed *cones*. Three of these cones and six rods are shown on a larger scale.

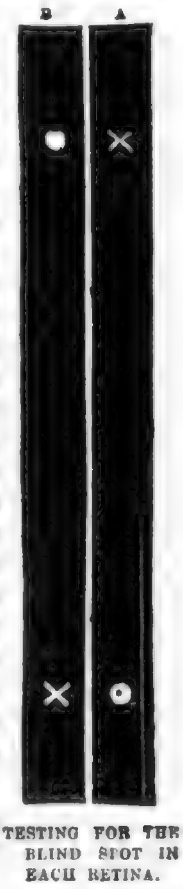
Where the optic nerve enters the eye it spreads out its filaments in all directions, forming the fore-part, (*b*), of the retina; and these, doubtless, are in connection with the rods and cones at the back. The intermediary structures are stated in the detailed inscription to the cut.

One would naturally suppose that the portion of the retina turned toward the light would be the part which is affected by it; we shall see, however, as we proceed, that such is not the case, but that these rods and cones at the very back of the retina are the agents which *feel* the light after it has passed through the transparent parts which lie in front. There are minute blood-vessels in the retina, ramifications of the artery which enters the eye along with the optic nerve, and they are spread out in the portion of the membrane which lies between the layer of rods and cones and the surface in contact with the vitreous humor. Evidence of their existence may be easily obtained without even having recourse to dissection. Let the reader try the following simple experiment upon himself, by means of which he will see the shadows of the vessels like the black and bare arms of a tree seen against a red sunset sky. No light must be in the room save that of a candle, and this must be employed in the following way: Close one eye, and with the other stare into the dark vacancy. Now move the candle-flame up and down near to the outer side of the open eye, so that the light enters it in a slanting direction. Under these circumstances the reader will see a series of diverging black lines against a red ground, which are known as *Purkinje's figures.**



THE RODS AND CONES ON A LARGER SCALE; THERE ARE THREE OF THE LATTER BETWEEN SIX OF THE FORMER.

For the success of the experiment it is very necessary to keep the candle moving. Sir Charles Wheatstone invented an instrument fcr showing an original variation of this experiment. It consists of a circular plate of metal, about two inches in diameter, blackened at its outer side and perforated at its centre, with an aperture about half an inch in diameter. To the inner face is fixed a similar plate of ground glass. On placing the aperture between the eye and the flame of a candle, and keeping the plate in motion, so as to displace continually the image of the aperture on the retina, the ramifying lines are seen distributed as before, but brighter. In the very centre of the field of vision there is a small circular space, in which no traces of vessels appear; this is the most sensitive portion of the retina. When this portion of the retina is examined it is found to be full of close-set cones—a fact which, taken along with another we shall now mention, seems to show that these cones are the portions of the retina which are sensitive to light. Where the optic nerve enters the retina there are no cones; this spot is blind. We have experimentally ascertained that the optic nerve enters the eye a little to one side of its central part, and as the eye rests in the head it is the side nearest the nose where the nerve enters.



TESTING FOR THE BLIND SPOT IN EACH RETINA.

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* In some of our best physiological text-books the idea is given that *bright* lines on a *dark* ground are seen—a curious mistake.

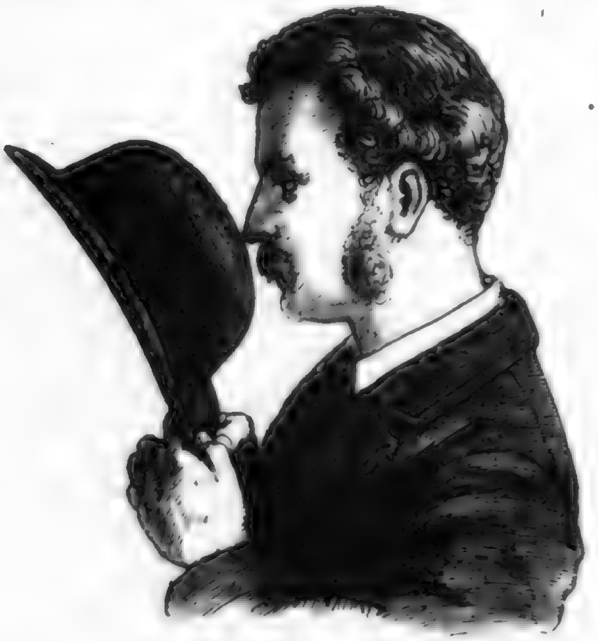
ABOUT EYES.

The following experiment proves that the point of entrance is not sensitive to light: Close the left eye, and regard the cross (page 123, A) steadily with the right, held, say, eighteen inches away. Now bring the paper gradually nearer, keeping the gaze fixed on the cross, while, however, an effort is made to keep the white circle in sight without turning the eye away from the cross. As the cross nears the eye, a position is reached where the white circle disappears. Upon continuing the approach of the cross, the white circle comes into view again. Now close the right eye and follow precisely the same directions with the following circle and cross (B), keeping the eye steadily fixed on the cross as before. It will be found again that at one stage of the approach of the cross the white circle disappears. This experiment proves that there is a spot on each retina on its nasal side which is blind; this spot is the entrance of the optic nerve, which has accordingly been called the *punctum cæcum*, or blind spot.

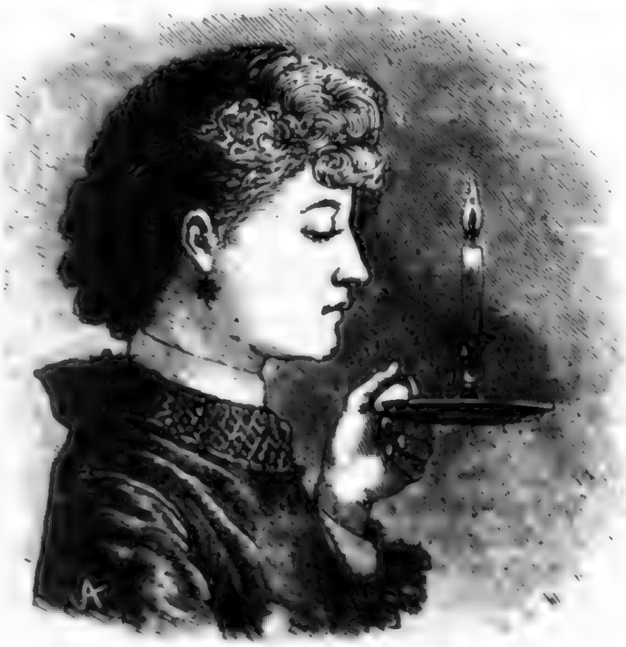
On page 126 we have endeavored to represent the conditions in these two experiments. Three positions of the circle and cross with respect to the eyes are shown. In the second position, where the image of the circle rests in each case on the blind spot, the circle cannot be seen. It has again come into sight by the time the third position is reached, and when the image no longer rests on the entrance of the optic nerve. These two facts, then, that there are no cones in that spot of the retina which is blind, that there are cones nearly to the exclusion of other elements in the spot of retina where vision is most acute, would lead us to suppose that these cones are in some way concerned in the phenomenon of vision. Nocturnal birds, like owls, are said to have very few cones, and the eel, which lives in dark mud, none at all. The mode of occurrence of Purkinje's figures likewise points to the region of the cones as being that which is influenced by light. In producing these figures the light falls on the inner surface of the retina, so that whatever perceives the shadows of the blood-vessels will necessarily lie on the other side of them, namely, in the locality of the rods and cones.

The question arises, What makes this layer of the retina sensitive to light? Can it be the peculiar form of the rods and cones which are adapted to take up ethereal wave-motion? or can it be because in this region there is that coloring matter which is known as the *visual* purple? The working out of the question has so far proved a most baffling inquiry, and we cannot do better here than give the results of the most recent research.

Some have supposed that the retina, like the sensitized plate in a photographer's camera, is a membrane upon which the light acts and prints images of external objects. It is noteworthy, however, that the philosopher to whom we owe much evidence that would seem to support this hypothesis thinks that the retina, so long as it is maintained in its natural connections with the *pigment* of the choroid coat, resembles not so much a photographic plate as a whole photographic workshop, in which the operator, by bringing new sensitive material, is always renewing the plates, and at the same time washing out the old



THE PIN-HEAD EXPERIMENT.



HOW TO SEE PURKINJE'S FIGURES.

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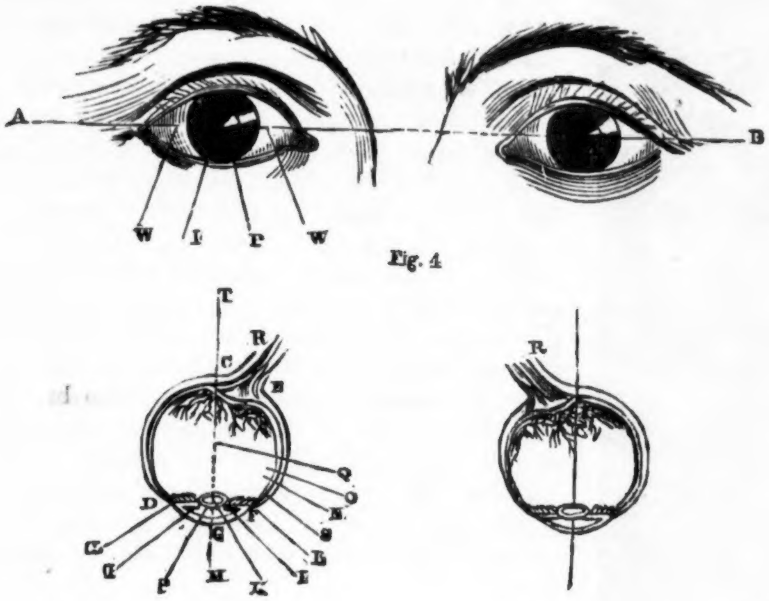
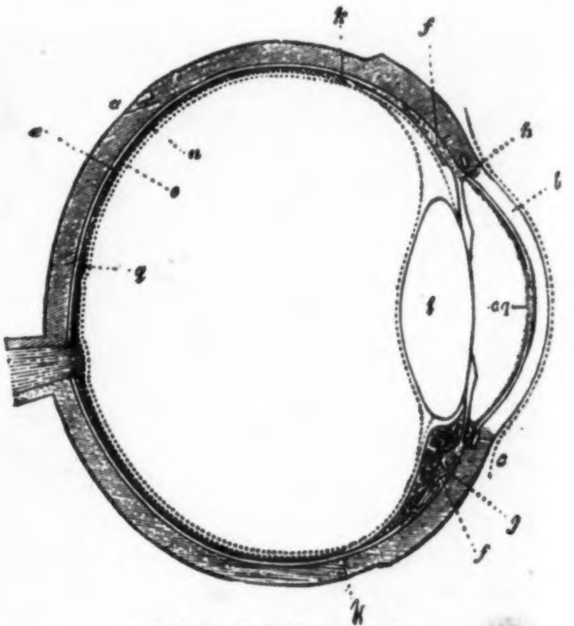


Fig. 4

EYE WITH SECTIONS SHOWING LINE OF VISION.



SECTION OF THE HUMAN EYE.

(*a*) Sclerotic Coat ; (*b*) Cornea ; (*c*) Conjunctiva ; (*e*) Choroid Coat ; (*f*) Ciliary Muscle ; (*g*) Ciliary Processes ; (*h*) Iris ; (*i*) Optic Nerve ; (*k*) Boundary of Retina ; (*l*) Crystalline Lens ; (*n*) Choroid Pigment ; (*o*) Retina ; (*q*) Yellow Spot of Retina ; (*aq*) Aqueous Humor ; (*v*) Vitreous Humor.

image ; for Kühne, to whom we refer, found that the visual purple could be renewed upon bringing a bleached retina into contact with the layer of pigment which lines the choroid coat.

And here we may remark that this pigment forms the natural support of the rods. The pigment, when viewed under the microscope, appears to be formed of six-sided particles, arranged side by side, as represented at *a* (page 126) ; *b* is a side view of two of these particles, and at *c* one is seen with retinal rods imbedded in it.

Kühne recounts some other remarkable experiments, a few of which we may here describe as bearing on this subject.

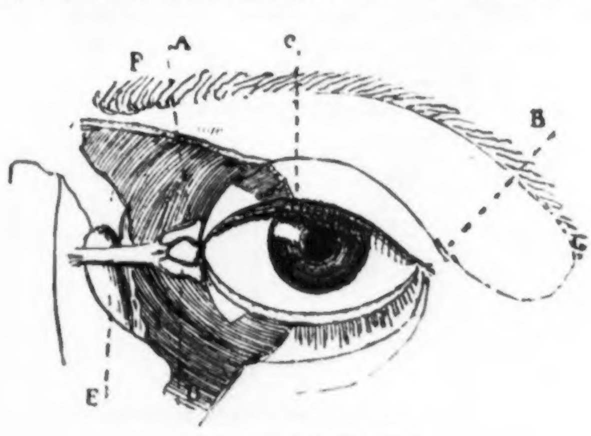
On one occasion a frog exposed only to blue light kept its eye steadily fixed on the flame. After fourteen hours' exposure it was found that a beautiful image of the gas-light had been photographed on the retina, appearing perfectly colorless on a deep red ground. It will be observed that we have here a phenomenon analogous to what would take place in our experiment, represented on page 122, supposing the screen IV. were colored, and the light had the power to imprint its white likeness on it.

MUSCLES AND NERVES CONNECTED WITH THE EYE.

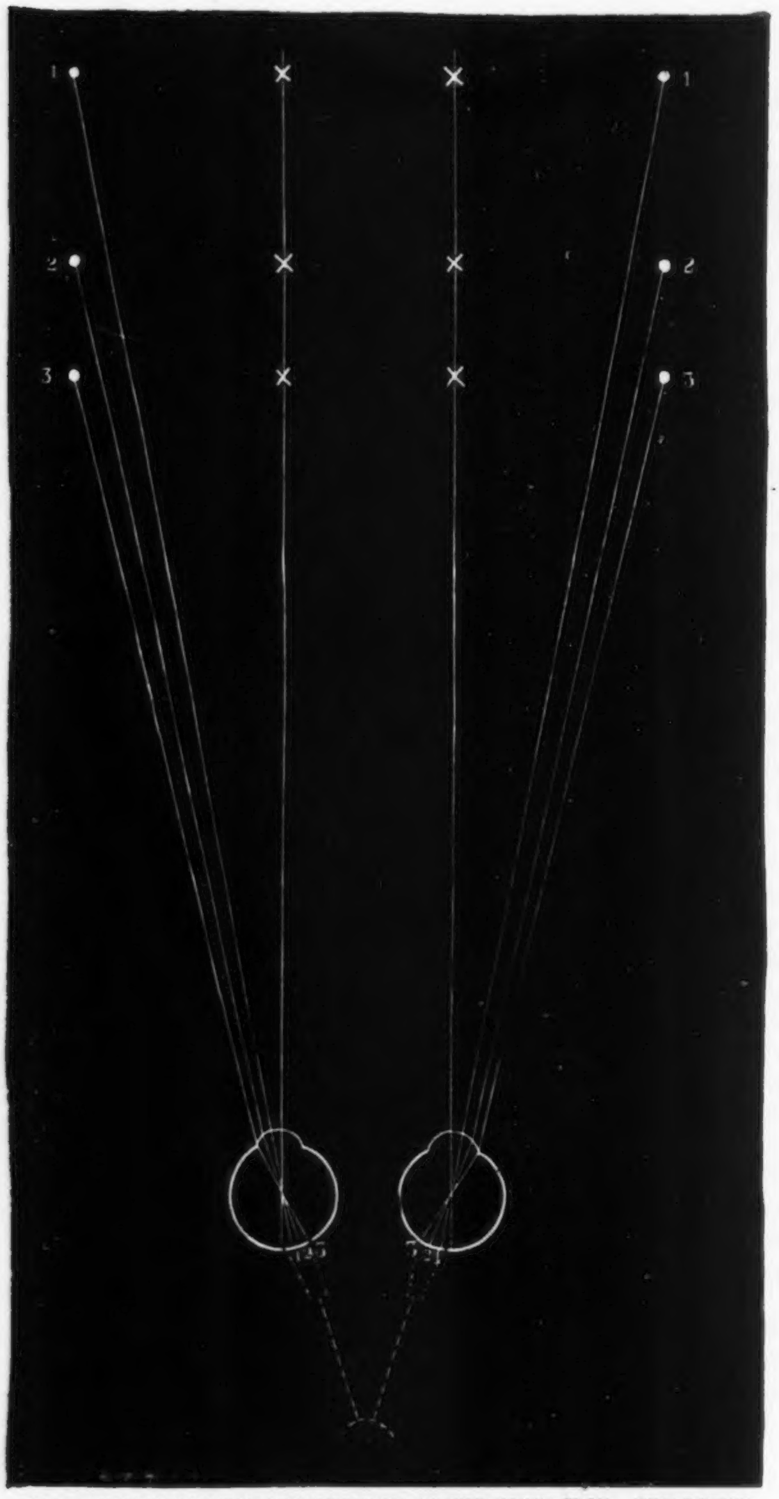
These *optograms*, or retinal photographs, are not easily obtainable, and Kühne had long tried to get them in the eyes of the larger mammals before he was successful in the case detailed above. One of the difficulties in the way of successful optography arises from the fact that the front layers of the retina become opaque in death, and as the visual purple is in the region of the rods and cones at the back, the light can evidently not penetrate so far. Kühne accordingly found it necessary to remove and invert the retina for optographic purposes. Whilst treating of this matter he is careful to remark that there are not wanting imaginative persons who profess to have seen in the eye of a murdered person the image of the murderer, but for his part he cannot corroborate their wild assertions.

This photographic change of the retina under the influence of light is associated with a change in its electrical condition, and just as various kinds of light bleach the visual purple in different degrees, so in like manner various kinds of light influence the electrical condition of the retina in different degrees. To ascertain this Messrs. Dewar and McKendrick experimented on a great number of animals—snakes, frogs, toads, newts, gold-fishes, sticklebacks, rockling, the common crab, the swimming crab, spider-crab, lobster and hermit-crab. They were able to show that in each of these cases when light falls on the retina its electrical condition is altered, and afterward they ascertained the same fact with regard to the cat, rabbit, pigeon and owl. Some of the results of their series of elaborate experiments are these :

1. That the specific effect of light on the eye is to change the electrical condition of the retina and optic nerve. 2. That the change is in agreement with Fechner's law. 3. That those rays, such as yellow, which appear to our consciousness to be the most luminous, affect the electrical condition the most ; and that those, such as violet, which are least luminous, affect it least ; that this



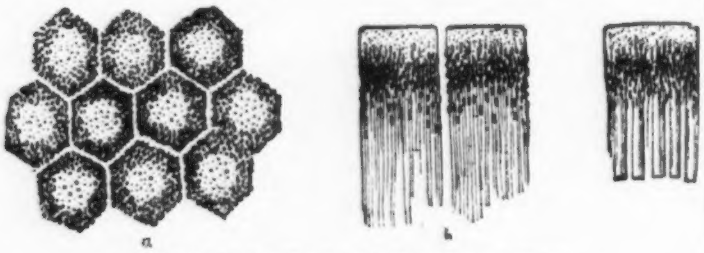
THE MOTION OF THE EYE.



HOW WE PERCEIVE THE INSENSIBILITY OF THE BLIND SPOT. THE DOTTED LINES SHOW THE DIRECTION OF THE OPTIC NERVES UNTIL THEIR JUNCTION UPON ENTERING THE BRAIN.

electrical change is essentially dependent on the retina, because, if this structure is removed, while the other structure of the eye lives, there is no sensitiveness to light.

These two phenomena, then, the bleaching of the retina and its electrical change, are probably both concerned in the act of vision, and more especially the latter, for there may be something more than analogy in experiments like that of Siemens, wherein an artificial eye is made to vary the indications of a galvanometer with each alteration in color or intensity of the light entering it.



THE BLACK PIGMENT OF THE CHOROID COAT.

(a) Six-sided Particles of Pigment ; (b) Side-view of two ; (c) one with Attached Rods.

Now we are in a better position than when we started to inquire into the reason why we perceive external objects so well in daylight. The light reflected from these bodies, varying in color and quantity, enters the eye, and by means of its media forms a perfect image at the back; wonderful changes are all the while going on in the substance of the retina, varying in amount with the nature of the image on it, and intelligence of these changes is transmitted along the optic nerve in some way, to produce in the brain an idea of what is before the observer. The growth of this power, from the "evolutionist's" standpoint, we cannot give in better words than those which were used by Professor Tyndall, in his memorable Belfast address to the British Association:

"In the lowest organisms we have a kind of tactual sense diffused over the entire body; then, through impressions from without, and their corresponding adjustments, special portions of the surface become more responsive to stimuli than others. The senses are nascent, the basis of all of them being that simple tactual sense which the sage Democritus recognized 2,300 years ago as their common progenitor. The action of light, in the first instance, appears to be a mere disturbance of the chemical processes in the animal organism, similar to that which occurs in the leaves of plants. By degrees the action becomes localized in a few pigment cells, more sensitive to light than the surrounding tissue. The eye is here incipient. At first it is merely capable of revealing differences of light and shade produced by bodies close at hand. Followed as the interception of the light is in almost all cases by the contact of the closely adjacent opaque body, sight in this condition becomes a kind of 'anticipatory touch.' The adjustment continues; a slight bulging out of the epidermis over the pigment-granules supervenes. A lens is incipient, and through the operation of infinite adjustments, at length reaches the perfection that it displays in the hawk and the eagle."

RECENT PROGRESS IN SCIENCE.

How to Wear the Life-preserver.—There is an ingenious mode of showing how life-preservers should be put on. It has very properly been contended that vessels of every description should be compelled to carry an ample supply of life-preservers; but it has been noticed that though many ships have complied with so reasonable a regulation, there are some persons who do not know how to adjust the preserver, even when they have succeeded in obtaining it. Consequently, Mr. Delhommer has constructed an iron drinking-fountain in the model of a human figure, upon which the life-preserver has to be arranged in its exact position, as for use. Seeing that the fountain must be repeatedly visited by all the passengers, and that they cannot possibly fail to observe the preserver-arrayed figure, it is assumed that they will speedily acquire a knowledge of the manner of applying it. Of course a large supply of the life-saving apparatus must be kept on board readily accessible, the one on the model being employed for the sole purpose of explaining how it should be worn.

The first experiment with the electric light in connection with vegetation was made by Hervé-Mangon in 1861. He succeeded by means of it in developing chlorophyll in young seedlings of rye, but he did not succeed in demonstrating any chlorophyllian activity by the evolution of oxygen. Dr. Siemens has worked on a far larger scale than is possible in a laboratory experiment, and has substituted for the sun a little sun of his own. To quote the account in the London *Times*, "an electric centre of light equal to 1,400 candles, placed at a distance of two metres from growing plants, appeared to be equal to average daylight at this season of the year." As far as the experiments went, not merely were all the effects which, from a horticultural point of view, might be expected from daylight reproduced by the electric light, but, by making the latter supplement the former, double work was extracted from the plants, and the growth of vegetation under the prolonged Summer of northern latitudes was artificially imitated. The observation of Hervé-Mangon was also extended, and it was found that the electric light was competent to produce all the mechanical effects of daylight, such as bringing about the re-erection of the foliage of plants which during night-time exhibit the phenomenon of sleep. Seedlings of mustard which had never seen daylight were quite as green and vigorous as those which had never been submitted to the artificial light. The same result was shown by the foliage of carrots, and those which had been illuminated naturally by day and artificially by night, had leaves which were palpably taller and greener than those which, whether from natural or artificial sources, had only enjoyed a smaller amount of illumination.

A New Photographic Process.—The Japanese are now beginning to return in kind some of the scientific instruction which they have so diligently borrowed from Europe during several years past. One of the first-fruits of their Western culture is a new sort of photograph, something similar to the well-known English type-printing photograph. It had long been observed by the workmen engaged in making Japanese lacquer, that one of the substances has the singular property of becoming almost as hard as a stone when exposed to the action of sunlight; and a Japanese inventor has conceived the idea of applying it in the preparation of relief photographs. A slab covered with this material is exposed for twelve hours to daylight, which is allowed to pass through the "negative" plate placed in front of it. By this time the slab has become hardened to different degrees, according to the intensity of the light falling on it, or, in other words, according to the light and shade of the negative in front; and upon carefully scraping away the softer parts, a pictorial surface in low relief is obtained, similar to an engraver's block, and suitable for printing from.

Cow-tree Milk.—Amongst the numerous curious objects exhibited in Paris last year, were some bottles of cow-tree milk from Venezuela. This milk, or juice, is extracted from the plant known as the *Brosimum galactodendron*, and an analysis of the milk has been made, with the following results. The component parts are:

Alkalies	.5	per cent.
Caseine	1.7	"
Sugar, etc	2.8	"
Wax, saponifiable mass	35.2	"
Water	58.0	"
Undetermined	1.8	"

It will thus be seen that this juice bears a resemblance, so far as its sugar alkalies (phosphate) and fatty constituents go, to the milk of the domestic cow. Further, it has been ascertained that the waxy mass in the juice of the plant very much resembles the butter churned from ordinary milk, the solid constituents being almost identical; while those of the vegetable milk generally are three times as great as the solid constituents of cow's milk—resembling cream, in fact.

Prof. Colladon finds that the sheet of ebonite in the audiphone may be advantageously replaced by a sheet of fine elastic cardboard, the best kind being that smooth, dense variety known to the trade as *shalloon* board, or satin board (*carton d'orties*). This card audiphone costs but a trifling fraction of the ebonite article, and is on all hands admitted to yield a better result. Some experiments conducted in January by M. Colladon and by M. Louis Sager upon deaf-mutes, leave no doubt of the existence of cases in which the audiphone is successful. M. Colladon mentions the case of a professional singer who had been deaf for fourteen years, to whom the audiphone of cardboard brought back once more the power of hearing the music of a piano. It is an interesting point in M. Colladon's observations, that persons deaf-mute from birth evinced emotions of a pleasurable nature on thus hearing music for the first time.

It surprises people to see the great logs of poplar wood go through the powerful machine at the Connecticut River pulp-mill at Holyoke. The wood, as it is brought to the mill, is about the size of cord-wood used for fuel, and in this shape the machine takes it and gnaws it up very fine. So rapidly does this process go on, that the machine eats about seven and a half cords of wood a day, and this makes between *three and four tons of pulp*. After coming from the machine, the wood is put into vats and reduced by the action of chemicals. It is used for the manufacture of news and book paper, and pulp made from spruce-wood, which has more fibre than poplar, is sometimes used in the cheaper grades of writing-paper.

Photographing on Leather.—A successful mode of taking photographs on leather has been patented by Herr Lewisohn, of Stuttgard. A coating of copal varnish is put upon the leather, and well dried; then a second coating is placed over it, composed of albumen and white lead. When this is dry, the faced leather is ready for the silver bath which forms the sensitive surface. The composition of the albumen and white-lead varnish need not be very definite, so long as the stratum of lead deposited is thin and uniform. A little practical experience soon enables the operator to estimate the proportions to a nicety.

ENTERTAINING COLUMN.

How to mark table-linen.—Upset the gravy.

An ism to be put down by the police.—Ruffianism.

Better have large feet than a small understanding.

You never see a woman button anything she can pin.

What the cabbage said to the cook—"My heart is thine."

A Matchless Story.—One in which there are no weddings.

Leap-year Motto.—Look before you leap into matrimony.

Why are blushes like girls? Because they become women.

A lady is not benefitted by the length of dress trailing the floor.

A woman's curiosity will always go further than her pin-money.

"I like your impudence," as a pretty girl said when her beau kissed her.

The man who fell into a barrel of whisky said he was "depressed in spirits."

There is in the heart of woman such a deep well of love that no age can freeze it.

The wind always finds something to blow about, even if it only blows about one's ears.

Any girl has a right to look at a milliner's window and wish she had a rich husband.

A pretty wife's big account from the fashionable milliner's is, after all, only a bill of fair.

It is when the schoolgirl first puts an "e" to the word "lov" that the spell begins to work.

It is one of the curious ways of the world that a male hair-dresser often dyes an old maid.

The Postmaster-General should suppress matrimony, by all means, for matrimony is a lottery.

A man may be very well behaved before marriage, but after the knot is tied he is inevitably "made fast."

A man's great ambition is to be credited with some great feat; a woman's, to be credited with small feet.

It's easier to tie a knot in a bull's horn than to make your wife believe that every other night is a lodge night.

A woman who can take a mental inventory of another woman's attire in half a minute, will occupy an entire morning in telling her neighbor the details.

A lady was once asked why she always came so early to church. "Because," said she, "it is a part of my religion never to disturb the religion of others."

A newly-converted gambler, in an impassioned exhortation, said, in describing the millennium, there would be so many trumps that a little child should lead them.

A conservative old man said he didn't like the way his youngest daughter celebrated the wooden wedding, because she celebrated it by marrying a blockhead.

Pope says that beauty draws us with a single hair. It doesn't nowadays. When a beauty gets so bald-headed that she has but one hair left, she doesn't draw much.

We lose confidence in the woman, be she ever so amiable, who celebrates the anniversary of her wedding regularly, but disregards the yearly recurrence of her birthday.

"It is not the truth in her remarks," said a suffering husband, pointing to his wife, "that aggravates me, but it is the crushing quantity of remarks that she puts in her truth!"

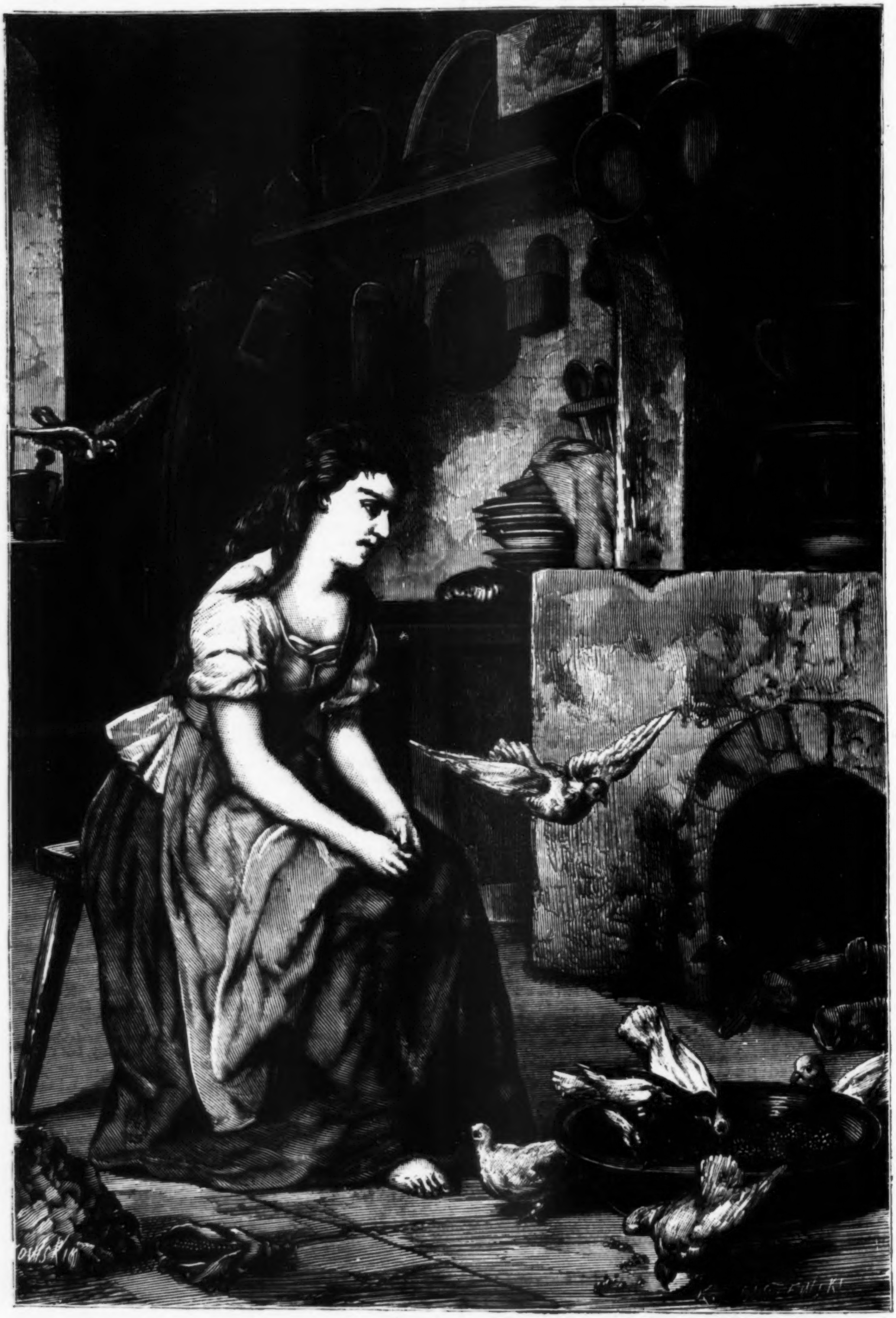
In reading descriptions of all sorts of new inventions, publications and medicines, a young married man is startled with the number of things that no family should be without.

A traveler, describing a tropical shower, wrote to a friend in the following words: "The raindrops were extremely large, varying in size from a shilling to eighteen pence."

They were inspecting a group of statuary, and she asked him who that female figure was. He said he wasn't certain about it, but he supposed it was a bust of Sahara—at least, it was a barren waist!

A damsel applied for a place behind the counter. "What clerical experience have you?" asked the man of drygoods. "Very little," she said, with a blush, "for I only joined the church last week."

XUM



FEEDING THE PIGEONS.

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